Śrī -Śrī Vilāpa Kusumāñjali

'A BOUQUET OF LAMENTATIONS"

By Śrīla Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī

FOREWORD

caitanya candra mama hṛt kumudaṁ vikāśya
hṛdyaṁ vidhehi nija cintana bhṛṅga raṅgaiḥ
kiṁ cāparādha timiraṁ niviḍaṁ vidhūya
pādāmṛtaṁ sadaya pāyaya durgataṁ mām
girivara taṭa kuñje mañju vṛndāvaneśā
sarasi ca racayan śrī rādhikā kṛṣṇa kīrtim
dhṛta rati ramaṇīyaṁ saṁsmaraṁs tat pādābjaṁ
vraja dadhi phalam aśnan sarva kālaṁ vasāmi

SUBJECT TO BE ASCERTAINED —

The name of Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī, who is one of the six Gosvāmī-*ācāryas*, who are the most excellent dear-most associates of Śrī Caitanya, the incarnation who sanctifies the current age of Kali, is world-famous. His renunciation, dispassion, fixation in worship, devotional eagerness etc. are established as the greatest examples of loving devotion and eternally attracts the faith of the practitioners of *rāga mārga.* This **'Vilāpa Kusumāñjali'** is one of the hymns of the collection of hymns called Stavāvalī, which was composed by him. In this book Śrīpāda Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī picked flowers of lamentation from the grove of his heart, which was filled with feelings of divine separation, which he then sprinkled with his tears and offered to the lotus feet of his most beloved deity, Śrī Rādhārāṇī. Deeply absorbed in his awareness of his spiritual body, Śrīpāda lamented eagerly for the direct vision of service of Śrī Rādhā like a young maidservant, who feels intense separation from the mistress of her life. That is **'Vilāpa Kusumāñjali'.** Such humble prayers, so full of deep yearning and intensely surging feelings of separation are rare indeed within Sanskrit literature. Newer and newer waves of desire surged within the river of his heart. He could not tolerate the pain of separation from Śrī Rādhā for even a moment. The more the time of his passing away approached, the more eager he became for Śrī Rādhā's direct vision and service, like a greatly loving maidservant. Every day his heart was burning in the forest fire of great separation from Śrī Rādhā! His lamentations of separation were like an intensely mounting flame that is belched out within this Vilāpa Kusumāñjali. All the aspirations for Śrī Rādhā's loving service as a maidservant that awoke within Śrīpāda's heart — the variegation, wonderfulness, excellence, expertise, eager prayer, Śrī Rādhā's beauty, sweetness, love, passion, Her service to Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Her eagerness to attain Śrī Kṛṣṇa - can all be ascertained within this hymn. By hearing of this, glorifying this and meditating on this the heart and mind of any sensitive devotee will be immersed in feelings of service to Śrī Rādhā and will become eager and anxious to attain the service of Śrī Rādhā's lotus feet — of this there is no doubt.

RĀGĀNUGĀ BHAKTI —

Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas take shelter of the mode of worship called *rāgānugā bhakti* (devotion in the wake of divine passions). Devotion in the wake of Vraja's *rāgātmikā* devotion is called *rāgānugā bhakti* —

virājantīm abhivyaktaṁ vrajavāsī janādiṣu
rāgātmikām anusṛtā yā sā rāgānugocyate (B.R.S. — 1.2.271)

In order to understand *rāgātmikā* or *rāgānugā bhakti* we must first understand the meaning of *rāga.* That deep, natural, loving thirst which causes the topmost absorption within the beloved deity is called **raga.**

iṣṭe svārasikī rāgaḥ paramāviṣṭatā bhavet
tanmayī yā bhaved bhaktiḥ sātra rāgātmikoditā (ibid — 1.2.272)
iṣṭe gāḍha tṛṣṇā rāga svarūpa lakṣaṇa
iṣṭe āviṣṭatā taṭastha lakṣaṇa kathana (C.C.)

"Deep thirst for the beloved deity is the inherent symptom of *rāga* whereas the absorption in the beloved deity is called the marginal symptom."

Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī has defined *rāga* and *rāgānuga* as follows: *tatra viṣayiṇaḥ svābhāviko viṣaya saṁsargecchātiśaya-mayaḥ premā rāga yathā cakṣurādīnāṁ saundaryādau tādṛśa evātra bhaktasya śrī bhagavatyapi rāga ityucyate.....yasya pūrvokte rāga-viśeṣe rucir eva jātāsti na tu rāga-viśeṣa eva svayaṁ tasya tādṛśa rāga-sudhākara karābhāsa samullasita hṛdaya sphaṭika-maṇeḥ śāstrādi śrutāsu tādṛśyā rāgātmikāyā bhakteḥ paripāṭīṣvapi rucir jāyate. tatas tadīyaṁ rāgaṁ rucyānugacchantī sā rāgānugā tasyaiva pravartate* (Bhakti Sandarbha 310). "*rāga* means the strong and natural desire of a sense-enjoyer for his beloved sense-objects. The senses, like the eyes, are naturally attracted to their objects, such as beautiful forms, and they need no encouragement in this. In the same way, when a devotee's heart is naturally attracted to the Lord and he has a deep thirst for the Lord then this is called *rāga*. When a mere ray of the nectar-moon of such *rāga* falls on the crystal-clear hearts of those devotees who only have some taste for a particular *rāga* but do not possess that *rāga* itself yet, then the heart rejoices and as a result of hearing from the scriptures and saints taste will awaken within the heart of such a devotee for the devotional expertise of a *rāgātmika bhakta*. This means that *ruci* (taste) will awaken within the heart when we hear about the loving devotional expertise of a *rāgātmika vraja-bhakta* from the scriptures or from the mouth of a saint whose heart is pure, that is, free from lust, anger and envy. The devotion which follows the *rāga* of a *rāgātmikā* Vraja-devotee along with *ruci* is called ***rāgānugā bhakti***".

Hardly anyone has such *ruci* in the first stage of devotional life, but still, when one hears about the loving activities of the people of Vraja (Kṛṣṇa's servants, friends, elders and lovers) from the mouth of a pure soul who performs *bhajana* while following the scriptural injunctions and who has thus become immersed in the pure *rāga* of Vraja, sacred greed will awaken in the heart of the neophyte devotee to attain such a love also. This is called **'rāgānugā bhajana'.** Of the different kinds of sweet love of Vraja's consorts Śrīman Mahāprabhu and His dear associates the Gosvāmīs have instructed us in the most excellent worship in the wake of *mañjarīs* like Śrī Rādhārāṇī's dear maidservant Śrī Rūpa Mañjarī. This Vilāpa Kusumāñjali of Śrīmat Dāsa Gosvāmīpāda is **filled with this sweet flavour of *mañjarī bhāva.***

MAÑJARĪ BHĀVA PRACTISE-

*mañjarī bhāva sādhanā***,** the spiritual practise in the mood of a maidservant of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī, is the unique gift of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu to the fallen souls of this age of Kali (quarrel), and it has been preached and spread particularly by His dearest associates Śrī-Śrī Rūpa and

Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī. There are two kinds of *madhurā rati* (conjugal mellows) in Vraja: 1) ***sambhogecchātmikā*** *(nāyikā bhāva,* the mood of an amorous heroine) and 2) ***tad bhāvecchātmikā*** *(sakhī-bhāva,* the mood of an amorous accomplice). In Bhakti Rasāmṛta Sindhu (1.2.299), Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī states: *tad-bhāvecchātmikā tāsāṁ bhāva mādhurya kāmitā:* "The devotional attitude of wanting to assist Śrī Rādhā and other *yūtheśvarīs* (*gopī*-groupleaders) in meeting Śrī Kṛṣṇa and enjoying amorous pastimes with Him and to relish the sweetness of these pastimes rather than to enjoy with Kṛṣṇa personally is called ***tad-bhāvecchātmikā*** or ***sakhī-bhāva.*** This attitude attracts the hero and heroine and awakens a causeless, completely sincere and unlimited love for the *yūtheśvarī* or *nāyikā*. Indeed, the heroine becomes dearer to such a devotee than his (her) own life-airs or even self! Śrī Rādhā has five kinds of girlfriends:

asyāḥ vṛndāvaneśvaryāḥ sakhya pañca-vidhāḥ matāḥ
sakhyaśca ***nitya sakhyaś ca prāṇa-sakhyaś ca*** *kāścana*
priya-sakhyaś ca parama preṣṭha sakhyaś ca viśrutāḥ

(Ujjvala Nīlamaṇi)

sakhīs are for instance Dhaniṣṭhā and Vindhyā, who are *kṛṣṇa-snehādhikā* (they love Kṛṣṇa more than Rādhā). *priya-sakhīs* and *parama preṣṭha-sakhīs* are Kuraṅgākṣī and the eight chief *sakhīs*, such as Lalitā and Viśākhā. They are *sama snehā* (having equal love for Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa), and the ***prāṇa-sakhīs and nitya-sakhīs*** are Kasturī, Maṇi Mañjarī and others, who are *rādhā snehādhikā* (they love Rādhā more than Kṛṣṇa). They are called ***mañjarīs.*** Their bodies consist of nothing but devotional service, and although they are in the class of *sakhīs t*hey are mostly surrendered to (assisting in) the intimate *nikuñja*-pastimes of Śrī-Śrī Rādhā-Mādhava due to their fixation in a service attitude. The sweet, relishable *rāgānugā bhajana* of the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas consists of allegiance to them.

śrī rūpa mañjarī āra, śrī rati mañjarī sāra,
lavaṅga mañjarī mañjulālī.
śrī rasa mañjarī saṅge, kasturikā ādi raṅge,
prema sevā kore kutūholī

"Blissfully render loving devotional service with Śrī Rūpa Mañjarī, Śrī Rati Mañjarī, Lavaṅga Mañjarī, Mañjulālī Mañjarī, Śrī Rasa Mañjarī, Kasturikā and others."

e sabhāra anugā hoiyā, prema sevā nibo cāiyā,
iṅgite bujhibo sab kāja.
rūpe guṇe ḍagamagi, sadā hobo anurāgī,
vasati koribo sakhīra mājha

"I will follow in their footsteps and render loving devotional service. Simply on their hints I will understand what is my duty. I will always be passionately absorbed in Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa's forms and qualities while I reside amongst the *sakhīs*."

vṛndāvane dui jana caturdike sakhīgaṇa,
samaya bujhiyā rasa sukhe
sakhīra iṅgita hobe, cāmara ḍhulā'bo kobe,
tāmbūla yogābo cāṅda mukhe.

"When Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa are enjoying in Vṛndāvana, surrounded by Their girlfriends, I will understand the time (for service) in *rasika* bliss. When will I get a hint from these girlfriends to wave a whisk-fan and place betel-leaves in Their moon-like faces?"

yugala caraṇa sevi, nirantara ei bhāvi,
anurāgī rohibo sadāya
sādhane bhāvibo jāhā, siddha dehe pābo tāhā,
rāga pathera ei se upāya

"I constantly think of the service of Their lotus feet and I will always stay there in great devotional attachment. Whatever I think of during my spiritual practise, this I will attain in my spiritual body. These are the ways of the path of *rāga.*"

(Prema Bhakti Candrikā, Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura)

After taking shelter of the lotus-feet of Śrī Guru, Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava-practitioners get acquainted with their own *mañjari* — or *siddha*-body in the process called Śrī Guru-*siddha praṇālī.* In the opinion of Śrī Jīva Gosvāmī this ***siddha***-body is one of the countless spiritual bodies present in the spiritual sky that are suitable for serving the Lord, and that are particles of the Lord's light. On the strength of meditation Śrī Gurudeva is aware which one of the countless spiritual bodies in the spiritual sky will be accepted by the Lord (as the spiritual body of the candidate), and he points out that body to the practitioner. This is not anyone's speculation. To consider the spiritual body of the practitioner, which automatically arises within the heart of Śrī Gurudeva, who is the compact embodiment of the Lord's compassion, steeped in the great power of the Lord, and which spontaneously arises within his meditation or recollection, as imaginary or false, is sheer atheism and a greatly harmful offence to devotion itself. The practitioner must identify himself with this spiritual body and meditate on it —

bāhye antara ihāra dui to sādhana;
bāhya - sādhaka dehe kore śravaṇa kīrtana
mane - nija siddha deha koriyā bhāvana;
rātri-dina kore vraje kṛṣṇera sevana (C.C.)

"There are two kinds of *sādhana* (devotional practise) - external and internal. Externally, within the *sādhaka deha* (gross physical body) one practises hearing and chanting the glories of Kṛṣṇa and internally, that is mentally, one meditates on one's own *siddha deha* (spiritual body) in which one serves Kṛṣṇa in Vraja day and night."

In the *rāgānugā*- practise of the most intimate feelings of the *mañjarī* there are two flawless ways of attaining the loving service of Śrī-Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa. One is external, which means that in one's material body of a devotional practitioner one hears, chants, worships the deity and offers prayers and so, in a way that is not unfavourable to one's own devotional feelings. The other type of practise is internal — one establishes one's self-esteem in the spiritual body which is given by Śrī Guru and with it mentally meditates on its loving service in the time-framework of Śrī-Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa's eternal eight-fold transcendental daily pastimes. The main internal practice of the practitioner is, according to his qualification, to mentally serve Śrī-Śrī Rādhā-Mādhava with Their girlfriends and to remember Their forms, attributes and pastimes alongside. While the practitioner remembers the forms, attributes and pastimes of Śrī-Śrī Rādhā-Mādhava and thus relishes Their sweetness within this internal practise of recollection, he should take special care that this does not become a mechanical, duty-bound practice — he should take care that there is a gradual increase of eagerness for the attainment of the direct service of the Lord upon Whom he meditates.

A practitioner who has attained the stage of *rati* will spontaneously perceive his spiritual body within himself, while the practitioner who did not attain *rati* yet will intently perform mental service within his mentally conceived spiritual body. As the dirt of lusty, material desire is removed from the practitioner's heart through this external practise of hearing, chanting etc., accordingly he perceives his spiritual body either indistinctly, somewhat clearly or very clearly and accomplishes the beauty of his mental service. The careful practitioner gives up his identification with his mortal mundane body and its belongings and relationships and endeavours to firmly identify himself with his spiritual form. Such encouragements can be found also in the scriptures that were composed by the ancient seers —

ātmānaṁ cintayet tatra tāsāṁ madhye manoramāṁ
rūpa yauvana sampannāṁ kiśorīṁ pramadākṛtiṁ
sakhīnāṁ saṅginī rūpām ātmānaṁ vāsanāmayīm
ājñā sevāparāṁ tadvat ratnālaṅkāra bhūṣitām

(Sanat Kumāra Saṁhitā)

"An aspirant should think himself to be amongst them (the other *gopīs*), as an enchanting beautiful young adolescent female. As a female associate of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa's girlfriends like Lalitā and Viśākhā, she is dedicated to the services that are ordered to her and she is decorated with jewelled ornaments (that are given to her by Śrī Rādhā as remnants)."

The purport of the word ***cintayet*** here is that one should **see** oneself with the form and the feelings of an eternally perfect girlfriend and really **experience** that. In other words, one should nourish a firm esteem of "this body with this shape and this feeling - that is me." This is the endeavour of the practitioner, but actually the spiritual body awakens spontaneously within the heart of such a practitioner who has a service attitude, by the grace of the Lord. *yad yad dhiyā ta urugāya vibhāvayanti tat tad vapuḥ praṇayase sad anugrahāya* (Bhag. 3.9.11) Lord Brahmā told the Supreme Lord: "O Lord! You are very kind upon the devotees who are eager to serve You. Whatever body they meditate upon, which is favourable for their service and which they desire, He bestows upon them, so that He can accept their eternal service." When the practise reaches perfection the practitioner, with the aid of Yogamāyā (the divine illusion that assists the Lord in His pastimes), is blessed with attaining his desired ḷoving service of the Divine Youthful Pair Themselves in his spiritual body within the realm of Their pastimes.

ŚRĪLA RAGHUNĀTHA AND MAÑJARĪ BHĀVA :

Śrīmat Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmīpāda is Vraja's eternally perfect **'Rati Mañjarī'**or **''Tulasī Mañjarī'**. In Śrī-Śrī Gaura Govindārcana Paddhati Śrīman Mahāprabhu's dear associate Śrīla Gopāla Guru Gosvāmī has written-

ratyambujākhya kuñje'stīndulekhā kuñja dakṣiṇe
tatraiva tiṣṭhati sadā surūpā rati mañjarī
tārāvalī dukūleyaṁ taḍit tulya tanu-cchabiḥ
dakṣiṇā mṛdvikā khyātā tulasīti vadantī yām
asyā vayo dvimāsāḍhya hāyanāstu trayodaśa
pitāsyā vṛṣabhaṁ kānto divākhyaṁ śāradā prasūḥ
śvaśrūś ca sannikā proktā cāmara sevanānvitā
*iyaṁ hi **raghunāthākhyaṁ** prāptā gaura rase kalau*

"In the *kuñja* known as Ratyambuja (the lotus of Rati), south of Indulekhā's *kuñja,* the beautiful Rati Mañjarī always resides. Her dress is decorated with a cluster of stars and her body shines like lightning. She has a mild, submissive nature and is nick-named 'Tulasī'.[1] She is 13 years and two months old. Her father is Vṛṣabha, her husband Diva, her mother is named Śāradā and her mother-in-law Sannikā. Her service is fanning. In the age of Kali she has descended as **Raghunātha dāsa**." He descended to the mundane world along with Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu to give the best example to the world of how to practise *mañjarī bhāva* through his own *bhajana.* On the one hand he gave the world the example of how to perform loving devotion, how to renounce the world and how to be fixed in one's worship, on the other hand he showed how he was similarly always immersed within his self esteem as a *mañjarī* within his spiritual body — thus he gave the example of how to be greatly eager and anxious for attaining the personal loving service of Śrī Rādhā. The extraordinary renunciation, superhuman loving devotional conduct and unbroken absorption in the *siddha svarūpa* of Śrī Raghunātha, who is a mine of countless jewel-like attributes, is a new subject altogether within the history of worship in the spiritual realm. When he resided in Nīlācala (Jagannātha Puri), Śrīman Mahāprabhu was very pleased by seeing his extraordinary love-scented renunciation and rewarded him with the gifts of His very dear string of *guñjā* beads and His sacred rock from Mount Govardhana. Śrī Raghunātha then understood the Lord's secret intentions — *śilā diyā gosāi more samparpilā govardhane guñjā-mālā diyā dilā rādhikā caraṇe.* (C.C.) "By giving me the sacred rock the Lord offered me to Mount Govardhana and through the string of *guñjā*-beads He offered me to the lotus feet of Rādhikā." After the disappearance of Śrīman Mahāprabhu Śrīpāda went to reside at Śrī Rādhākuṇḍa, at the base of Śrī Girirāja, the place the Lord had bestowed upon him. Here, by Śrīman Mahāprabhu's grace, his mind became immersed in the recollection of divine pastimes and he became greatly **agitated with divine emotions.** There, on the shore of Śrī Rādhākuṇḍa, Śrīpāda composed the scripture named **Stavāvalī.** In this collection of hymns the surge of Śrīpāda's divine sentiments flow like a pure creek, as if it continually runs towards a boundless ocean of divine flavours. Wherever we look in the world of literature, we can find that such lovely poetry, so gracious, deep with feelings and decorated with sweetness, is very rare indeed. The river of Śrīpāda's *rasika* poetry is agitated with ever-fresh waves of beauty and sweetness and illuminated and enlarged by the tender rays of the moon of ever-fresh feelings, so that it has become relishable for both the loving devotee and the sensitive connoisseur of poetry! But only the one-pointed *rasika* devotees can perceive and relish the amazing high- and ebb-tide of **separation and meeting** that surge in a self-incited way in his heart's outbursts of divine passion in the Ganges-river of his poetry. Within Vilāpa Kusumāñjali an abundance of such feelings are seen. Here Śrīpāda's unbroken absorption in *mañjarī bhāva* is surely extremely astonishing! This is such a great example of the practise of *mañjarī bhāva*, that by hearing, chanting and recollecting it hundreds and hundreds of practitioners of *mañjarī bhāva* will be enlivened by this sky-high ideal and can be blessed with the practise of *mañjarī bhāva* — of this there is no doubt.

THE REASON FOR MAKING THIS BOOK-

[1] In this Vilāpa Kusumāñjali we have used the name 'Tulasī', because this is a dear nickname in the assembly of Śrī Rādhārāṇī and Her girlfriends and maidservants.

Although I am greatly unqualified I have recited and explained the hymn called 'Vilāpa Kusumāñjali' a number of times to the Vaiṣṇavas that reside at Śrī Rādhākuṇḍa and in Śrī Vṛndāvana, following their merciful order. Then the desire awoke within the Vaiṣṇavas' hearts for the publication of a book with a corresponding, lengthy commentary on this hymn. Following their merciful order I commence this difficult work, like a lame man that wants to climb a mountain, and by their merciful encouragement, remembering the lotus feet of the most worshipable Śrīmat Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmīpāda I am preparing the blueprint of my translation and 'Parimala Kaṇā'-commentary of Vilāpa Kusumāñjali on the bank of Śrī Rādhākuṇḍa, the place where he performed his *bhajana* and where he composed this book. This Vilāpa Kusumāñjali is the treasure of Śrī-Śrī Dāsa Gosvāmīpāda's worship, now appearing in the form of a book as a gift to be offered on the occasion of the celebration of the five-hundredth anniversary of the appearance of **Śrī-Śrī Gaurāṅga Mahāprabhu,** the sanctifier of the age of Kali, who was the heart's treasure of Śrīpāda Raghunātha, who was himself the manifestation of His compassion. Previously an unqualified fallen wretch like me has published a commentary on Śrī-Śrīla Prabodhānanda Sarasvatīpāda, named 'Rasa-varṣiṇī' as an offering to the lotus-feet of Śrīman Mahāprabhu during the festival to commemorate His five-hundredth birth-anniversary. The merciful Vaiṣṇavas and intellectual devotees were in topmost ecstasy after reading this and offered their merciful blessings to this fallen wretch. Depending on their merciful blessing and on their encouragement this ''Parimala Kaṇā'-commentary on Vilāpa Kusumāñjali was now published. Just as the predominance of Śrī Rādhā's glories are emphasised in Śrī Rādhā-Rasasudhānidhi, **in Śrī Vilāpa Kusumāñjali the heart's eagerness of the loving devotee, the anxiousness of separation and the expertise in serving Śrī Rādhā is the main topic.** By relishing these two sacred works the devotional practitioner will learn many valuable facts of the worship of the Divine Pair — there is no doubt about this at all.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS OF GRATITUDE —

When the most worshipable **Śrīla Ānanda Gopāla Gosvāmī**, who has passed to the eternal abode, lectured on Vilāpa Kusumāñjali in Śrī Vṛndāvana, one devotee made brief notes of it; a copy of this text, in Malayalam script, got in the possession of Śrī Rādhākuṇḍa's Śrīla **Kṛṣṇa dāsa Bābājī Mahārāja** (Madrasi Bābā). After getting this from Śrīla Kṛṣṇa dāsajī I have followed the line of this commentary as far as possible. At the end of the Parimala Kaṇā-commentary of each verse is a song-translation by the ancient poet Śrī-yukta Rasika-Candra dāsa Mahāśaya, which had been published by the office of Hoogly Bhaktiprabhā. This was again published in the Bengali year 1379 (1972) by Śrīla Tulasī Dāsa Adhikārījī, who had taken shelter of Śrī Rādhākuṇḍa and who has now passed to the eternal abode. I have received this by his grace. I express my heart's gratitude to all of them. The most affectionate Śrīmān Harekṛṣṇa Dāsa has spent many days in Śrī Vṛndāvana to proof-read this text and he has done it beautifully. I pray at the lotus feet of Śrī-Śrī Kuṇḍeśvarī and Śrīpāda Dāsa Gosvāmī for a successful *bhajana* for this devotee. Even after a lot of effort there are still some mistakes left in this book. If the merciful readers will correct this while relishing this book the insignificant work of this wretch will be successful. Signed, the lowly publisher.

VERSE 1:

TVAṀ RŪPA MAÑJARI SAKHI PRATHITĀ PURE'SMIN
PUṀSAḤ PARASYA VADANAṀ NA HI PAŚYASĪTI
BIMBĀDHARE KṢATAM ANĀGATA BHARTṚKĀYĀ
YAT TE VYADHĀYI KIM U TAC CHUKA PUṄGAVENA

tvaṁ - you; *rūpa mañjari* - O Rūpa Mañjari; *sakhi* - my dear girlfriend; *prathitā* - well known; *pure* - in the town; *asmin* - in; *puṁsaḥ* - man; *parasya* - of another; *vadanaṁ* - the face; *na* - not; *hi* - surely ; *paśyasi* - you look; *iti* - thus; *bimba-adhare* - on your lips, that look like red Bimba-fruits; *kñatam* - bites; *anāgata* - not come; *bhartṛkāyā* - your husband; *yat* - which; *te* - you; *vyadhāyi* - caused; *kim u* - what; *tat* - that; *śuka* - parrot; *puṅgavena* - by the best of.

My dear friend Rūpa Mañjari! In the township of Vraja you are well known for your chastity. You don't even look at the faces of other men! It is therefore surprising that your lips, that are as beautiful as red Bimba-fruits, have been bitten, although your husband is not at home. Has this maybe been done by the best of parrots?

Explanations: According to Vaiñṇava-researchers this Vilāpa Kusumāñjali is the final writing of Śrīlā Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī. This beautiful prayer can give us some insight into his intense feelings of transcendental love-in-separation from his Svāminī (mistress, or queen), before he entered into Śrī-Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa's eternal transcendental pastimes in his *siddha svarūpa*, or *mañjarī svarūpa*. Living on the bank of Śrī Rādhākuṇḍa he was totally immersed in the ocean of *līlā-rasa* and he had forgotten all about his body and everything connected with it, being deeply absorbed in his *svarūpāveśa*, his awareness of his transcendental identity. Vilāpa Kusumāñjali enables us to hear him painfully weeping as a realized maidservant of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī, who is suffering separation from her Svāminī, or mistress, day and night. Each verse of this unique book is drenched by the tears coming out of the heart of Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī, that is afflicted by feelings of separation. Each flower-like lamentation is filled with the honey of transcendental anguish. Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī personally revealed his mental condition in the opening verses of his 'Śrī Rādhā Aṣṭottara Śata Nāma Stotram':

avīkṣyātmeśvarīṁ kācid vṛndāvana maheśvarīm
tat padāmbhoja mātraika gatir dāsy ati kātarā
patita tad saras tīre rudaty ārta ravākulaṁ
tac chrī vaktrekṣanāvaptyai nāmāny etāni saṁjagau

"Not seeing her goddess, the Queen of Vṛndāvana, a certain maidservant, who considers Her lotus feet the only goal of Her life became very anxious, fell down at the shore of Her lake (Rādhākuṇḍa), cried loudly out of pain, and, just to see Her beautiful face, sang these names." A person who is bereft of the treasure of *bhajana* cannot even imagine how these severe feelings of separation are. Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī was suffering because he felt deprived of the devotional service of his beloved deity (Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī), and on top of that his heart was wounded by the fire of separation from Śrīla Rūpa and Sanātana Gosvāmī. *kṛṣṇa bhakta viraha vinā duḥkha nāhi āra* (Caitanya Caritāmṛta) "There is no other misery in

the world than separation from the devotees of Kṛṣṇa." In the eighth verse of his 'Svaniyama Daśakam' Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī gives some indication of this:

parityaktaḥ preyo-jana samudayair bāḍham asudhīr
durandhro nīrandhraṁ kadana-bhara vārdhau nipatitaḥ
tṛṇaṁ dantair daṣṭvā caṭubhir abhiyāce'dya kṛpayā
svayaṁ śrī gāndharvā sva pada nalināntaṁ nayatu māṁ

"Abandoned by my beloveds (Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī and Śrī Svarūpa Dāmodara) I have become completely blind and bereft of intelligence. Even though they have disappeared I am still alive and I'm immersed in an ocean of great misery. Holding a blade of grass between my teeth I humbly and anxiously pray that Śrī Gāndharvā (Rādhā) Herself may now take me to Her lotus feet." There's no other place where the severe heartache of separation can be cured than these lotus feet. Gradually Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī ended up in a terrible condition. Śrī Rādhā Vallabha dāsa, a Bengali *mahātma*, has described Śrīla Dāsa Gosvāmī's condition as follows:

rādhā kṛṣṇa viyoge, chāḍilo sakala bhoge
śukha rukha anna mātra sāra
gaurāṅgera viyoge, anna chāḍi dilo āge,
phala gavya korilo āhāra

"Śrīla Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī had given up all sense enjoyment out of separation from Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa and ate only dry tasteless food. Then, out of separation from Lord Gaurāṅga, he gave up eating that solid food and ate only fruits and milk."

sanātanera adarśane, tāhā chāḍi sei dine,
kevala koroye jala-pāna.
rūpera viccheda yabe, jala chāḍi dilo tabe,
rādhā kṛṣṇa boli rākhe prāna.

"Then, when Sanātana Gosvāmī left this world, he gave that up also and drank only water. When Rūpa Gosvāmī also left him, he even gave up drinking water and kept himself alive simply by saying the names of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa."

śrī rūpera adarśane, na dekhi tāhāra gaṇe,
virahe vyākula loiyā kāṅde
kṛṣṇa kathā ālāpana, nā śuniyā śravaṇa
uccasvare ḍāke ārtanāde.

"When he could not see Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī and his devotees anymore, he began to cry, suffering from their separation, and when he could not hear them speaking about Kṛṣṇa anymore, he loudly began to cry of grief."

hā hā rādhā kṛṣṇa kothā, kothā viśākhā lalitā,
kṛpā kori deho daraśan!
hā caitanya mahāprabhu, hā svarūpa mora prabhu,
hā hā prabhu rūpa sanātana!

kāṅde gosāi rātri dine, puḍi' jāy tanu mone,
kṣaṇe aṅga dhūlāya dhūsora

cakṣu andha anāhāra, āpanāra deha-bhāra
virahe hoilo jara jara.

"O Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa! Where are You?! Where are you, Viśākhā and Lalitā?! Please reveal yourself to me! O Caitanya Mahāprabhu! O my Lord, Svarūpa Dāmodara! O Lords Rūpa and Sanātana!" Day and night Śrīla Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī was crying like this, while his body and mind were burning, and his limbs were greyed by dust (as he rolled around on the ground). He had become blind from fasting and he considered his old and worn-out body to be a great burden out of these feelings of separation."

rādhākuṇḍa taṭe paḍi, saghane niśvāsa chāḍi,
mukhe vākya na hoy sphurana.
manda manda jihva noḍe, prema aśru netre paḍe,
mone kṛṣṇa koroye smaraṇa.

"Falling on the bank of Rādhākuṇḍa, he breathed out deeply, unable to say a word. His tongue moved slowly as tears of love fell from his eyes and he remembered Kṛṣṇa." In such an anxious, pitiful mood of separation Śrī Raghunātha dāsa was crying 'Vilāpa Kusumāñjali'. Therefore this book is the incomparibly relishable treasure of the practising *rāgānugā* devotees, who are themselves also suffering separation from Śrī Rādhā's lotus feet. Hence for the *samavāsana sāmājika* (the *rasika* devotees) the practice of hearing and chanting these wonderful prayers is a beautiful means of *sādhāraṇī-karaṇa* (identifying oneself with a transcendental role-model), and will help them to attain an astonishing relish of *vipralambha rasa* (love-in-separation). But this practice should be done in full awareness of one's *siddha svarūpa* (spiritual body). A person who tries to relish these sweet mellows while (feeling himself) sitting in the prisonhouse of the material body, simply deceives himself.

ātmānaṁ cintayet tatra tāsāṁ madhye manoramāṁ
rūpa yauvana sampannāṁ kiśorīṁ pramadākṛtiṁ
sakhīnāṁ saṅginī rūpām ātmānaṁ vāsanāmayīm
ājñā sevāparāṁ tadvat ratnālaṅkāra bhūṣitām

(Sanat Kumāra Saṁhitā)

"A practising devotee should think himself to be amongst them (the other *gopīs*), as an enchanting beautiful young adolescent female. As a female associate of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa's girlfriends she is dedicated to the services that are ordered to her and she is decorated with jewelled ornaments (that are given to her by Śrī Rādhā as remnants)."

In this verse Śrīla Dāsa Gosvāmī offers a *sarasa stava* (tasty praise) to his own *guru* Śrī Rūpa Mañjarī in his own *siddha svarūpa*. It is called *sarasa stava* because here Śrī Gurudevī is a *priya sakhī*. The first three verses take place within one *līlā*. When the *svarūpāveśa* becomes very intense in the *sādhaka deha* (material body of the devotee) the devotee can not be happy and satisfied anymore with his experiences during *smaraṇa*, dreams and visions (*sphuraṇa*) as he was before. He is constantly burning in the fire of want for the direct attainment of his beloved. When on top of that these visions and other awarenesses also vanish from him, this fire assumes a terrible form and he finds no way to keep himself alive. In that condition his beloved deity personally comes to console him, or His associates come to console him. In this verse Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī is in *svarūpāveśa* and sees himself as Śrī Rādhā's maidservant, but whenever he loses hold of his spiritual absorption he suffers intolerable pain. Rolling on the bank of Rādhākuṇḍa he then cries out loudly for his Svāminī.

Śrīmatī Rūpa Mañjarī has accomplished the meeting of Rādhikā and Śyāmasundara in a solitary cave of Govardhana Hill, and she secretly looks through a hole in that cave to witness

Their sweet love-pastimes. Rādhā and Śyāma are both intoxicated by Each other's presence. How expertly are They playing Their pastimes! At the end of these pastimes Śyāmasundara bites Śrīmatī's lips, leaving a mark there. The relationship between Rādhikā and Rūpa Mañjarī is so pure that all the signs of Kṛṣṇa's lovemaking on Śrī Rādhikā's body, such as His bitemarks on Her lips, become manifest on Śrī Rūpa Mañjarī's body also. Śrī Rūpa Mañjarī is beside herself of ecstasy, so she's not aware of this reflection. Then she thinks to herself: "Aha! My *sakhī* Tulasī Mañjarī (Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī) has not seen these sweet pastimes! Where is she? Alas, I should bring her here and show this to her!", so she leaves the window and starts searching for Tulasī. When Tulasī meets Rūpa Mañjarī, she notices Kṛṣṇa's bite marks on her lips and jokingly asks her: "My dear friend Rūpa Mañjari! You never look at the faces of other men! You're famous in Vraja for your chastity! But, despite the fact that your husband is not at home, I see that your lips have been bitten! Has some great parrot maybe done this?"[2] If anyone considers the words *śuka puṅgavena* to indicate that Śrī Rūpa Mañjarī was enjoyed by Śrī Kṛṣṇa, then that would contradict the definition the *ācāryas* have given of the *mañjarīs* within their books.

ananya śrī rādhā padakamala dāsyaika rasadhī
hareḥ saṅge raṅgam svapana samaye nā'pi dadhati
balāt kṛṣṇa kūrpāsakabhidi kim apy ācarati kā-
py udāśrur meveti pralapati mamātma ca hasati

(Vṛndāvana Mahimāmṛta 16, 94)

The maidservants, that are exclusively devoted to the service of Śrī Rādhā's lotus feet, that are like an ocean of nectar, do not enjoy with Śrī Hari even in their dreams. When Kṛṣṇa forcibly pulls at their bodices they cry out: 'No, no!', while Rādhikā watches and laughs." Śrīmatī laughs here because of the *kiṅkarīs*' loyalty to Her service. The bee enjoys the flowers, not the buds (*mañjarīs*). The buds (*mañjarīs*) enhance the bee's thirst for the flowers. They are *mañjarīs* in name, *mañjarīs* in form and *mañjarīs* in nature! Śrī Rūpa is the bud of Śrī Rādhā's form (*rūpa mañjarī*), Śrī Rati Mañjarī is the bud of Śrīmatī love (*rati*), Śrī Vilāsa Mañjarī is the bud of Śrī Rādhā's love-play (*vilāsa*). Śrī Kṛṣṇa accepts defeat at their *bhāva-niṣṭhā.*

rādhā raṅga lasat tad ujjvala kalā sañcāraṇā prākriyā
cāturyottaram eva sevanam ahaṁ govinda samprārthaye
yenāśeṣa vadhū janodbhata manorājya prapañcāvadhau
nautsukyaṁ bhavad aṅga saṅgama rase'py ālambate man manaḥ

(Ujjvala Nīlamaṇi Sakhi 88)

One *sakhī* was picking flowers for making a *vana-mālā* and Kṛṣṇa, seeing her, told her: "O beautiful girl! Make your birth a success by joining Me for a while in this *kuñja*!" Hearing this, that *sakhī (mañjarī)* said: "O Govinda! I only want to serve while You make love with Śrī Rādhā, showing Your brilliant amorous skills on the stage of erotic dancing named Śrī Rādhā! All the girls of Vraja find the limit of perfection on the strength of this service, therefore, O Gokula-candra! My mind is never eager to relish the *rasa* of Your Anaṅga-saṅga (erotic union). Please just engage me in this long-desired service!"

Śrī Viśvanātha Cakravartī writes in his 'Ānanda Candrikā' commentary on this verse: *tvayā saha sāṅga saṅga sukhād api jāla randhrādau śrī rādhāṅga-saṅga darśanotthaṁ sukham*

[2]This pastime and the preceding paragraph are described by Śrī Kiśora Gopāla Gosvāmī, the eldest son of Śrīla Ānanda Gopāla Gosvāmī.

adhikam anubhūtaṁ man manasā. na hi labdhādhika sukha jana alpe sukhe pravartante iti bhāvaḥ. "I relish more pleasure in witnessing Your sports with Śrī Rādhā in the *kuñja* looking through the holes in the vines than in personally enjoying with You. People don't endeavour for a smaller happiness when they can attain greater happiness!"

Even Śrī Rādhā Herself fails in having them meet with Śrī Kṛṣṇa:

tvayā yad upabhujyate murajid aṅga saṅge sukham
tad eva bahu jānati svayam avāptitaḥ śuddha-dhīḥ
mayā kṛta vilobhanāpy adhika cāturi cāryayā
kadāpi maṇi mañjarī na kurute'bhisāra spṛhaṁ

Śrī Rādhikā engaged one *sakhī* to make Maṇi Mañjarī meet with Kṛṣṇa, but that *sakhī* returned to Rādhā unsuccessfully, saying: "O Rādhe! Maṇi Mañjarī finds more happiness in Your meeting with Kṛṣṇa than in her own! Just see how pure her consciousness is! Although I expertly tried to tempt her to go out and meet Kṛṣṇa, she never desires this!" (Ujjvala Nīlamaṇi, sakhī prakaraṇa 89)

The special reward the *mañjarīs* get from their *abhinava bhāva-śuddhi* (novel, immaculate attitude) is unatttainable even for the *preṣṭha sakhīs* like Śrī Lalitā. Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī has written in his Vraja Vilāsa Stava (38):

tāmbūlārpaṅa pāda-mardana payo dānābhisārādibhir
vṛndāraṇya maheśvarīṁ priyatayā yās toṣayanti priyāḥ
prāṇa preṣṭha sakhī kulād api kilāsaṅkocitā bhūmikāḥ
kelī bhūmiṣu rūpa mañjarī mukhās tā dāsikāḥ saṁśraye

"I take shelter of Śrī Rādhikā's maidservants, headed by Rūpa Mañjarī, that always engage in serving betel leaves, massaging the feet, serving water, and arranging for the Divine Couple's secret trysts. These maidservants are even more dear to the great Queen of Vṛndāraṇya (Śrī Rādhikā) than the *prāṇa preṣṭha sakhīs* (the girlfriends that are dearer to Her than life), and She is therefore not at all shy before them!"

rati-raṇe śramayuta, nāgarī nāgara
mukha bhari tāmbūla yogāya
malaya-ja kuṅkuma, mṛga-mada karpūra,
militahi gāta lāgāya

aparūpa priya sakhī prema!
nija prāṇa koṭi, dei niramañchai,
naha tula lākho bāṇa hema

"How wonderful is the love of the *priya sakhīs*! They serve Nāgarī (heroine Rādhikā) and Nāgara (hero Kṛṣṇa) with millions of lives when They are tired of lovemaking, by filling Their mouths with betelleaves and by anointing Their bodies with sandalwoodpaste, vermilion, musk and camphor. Their love is so pure that it cannot even be compared to gold molten a hundred-thousand times over!"

manorama mālya, duhu gole arpai,
vījai śīta mṛdu bāta
sugandhī śītala, koru jala arpaṇa,
yaiche hota duhu śāṅta

"They offer enchanting garlands to Their necks, give Them a cool breeze by fanning Them, and relieve Them from Their heated affliction by offering Them cool and fragrant water."

duhuka caraṇa puna, mṛdu saṁvāhana,
kori śrama korolohi dūra
iṅgite śayana, korolo duhu sakhī-gaṇa
sabahu manoratha pūra

"These *sakhīs* again softly massage Their feet and thus remove Their fatigue. On Their indication they put the Divine Pair to rest and fulfill any of Their other desires."

kusuma śeje duhu, nidrita herai,
sevana parāyaṇa sukha.
rādhā mohana dāsa, kiye herabo,
meṭabo sab mano-dukha

"These girls, that are totally dedicated to their devotional service, then put the Divine Pair to sleep on a bed of flowers. All the mental distress of Rādhā Mohana dāsa is mitigated when he sees this."

The sweet relish of this confidential pastime of the Śrī-Śrī Yugala Kiśora is the long-desired treasure of the *mañjarīs.* Hence the *mañjarīs* never desire personal meetings with Śrī Kṛṣṇa. But that does not mean that they are deprived of this *rasa.* Their one-ness in feeling (*bhāva-tādātmya*) with Śrī Rādhā is so remarkable that they experience all of Her bodily relish in a special way.

spṛśati yadi mukundo rādhikāṁ tat sakhīnāṁ
bhavati vapuṣi kampa sveda romañca vāṣpam
adhara madhu mudāsyās cet pibaty esa yatnād
bhavati bata tad āsāṁ mattatā citram etat

"How amazing! When Mukunda touches Rādhikā, Her girlfriends cry of ecstasy and their bodies tremble, perspire, and are studded with goosepimples, and when Kṛṣṇa blissfully drinks the honey of Rādhikā's lips (by kissing Her), then they all become mad!" (Govinda Līlāmrta 11.137)

Śrī Rasika-Candra Dāsa sings:

he sakhi rūpa mañjari, tumi ei vrajapurī,
mājha satī boliyā prathita.
para puruṣera mukha, herite nā vāsa sukha,
tabe keno dekhi viparīta?

"O *sakhi* Rūpa Mañjari! In this abode of Vraja you are reputed for your chastity. You feel no happiness in seeing other men's faces; but why do I see just the opposite now?"

pati tava nāhi ghare, tabu-o ye bimbādhare,
hoiyāche kṣata cihna sab
bujhi śuka-pakṣī-rāja, koriyāche ei kāja,
natuvā eirūpa asambhava

"Your husband is not at home, but still I see cuts all over your Bimbafruit-like lips! I understand that the king of parrots has done this, otherwise this is impossible!" ·

VERSE 2:

STHALAKAMALINI YUKTAṀ GARVITĀ KĀNANE'SMIN
PRAṆAYASI VARA HĀSYAṀ PUṢPA GUCCHĀC CHALENA
API NIKHILA LATĀS TĀḤ SAURABHĀKTĀḤ SA MUṢCAN
MṚGAYATI TAVA MĀRGAṀ KṚṢṆA-BHṚṄGO YAD ADYA

sthalakamalini - O female landlotus!; *yuktaṁ* - befitting; *garvitā* - proud; *kānane asmin* - in this forest; *praṇayasi* - you do; *vara* - best; *hāsyaṁ* - laughing; *puṣpa* - flower; *guccha* - a bunch; *chalena* - with a pretext; *api* - even though; *nikhila* - all; *latā* - vines; *tā* - they; *saurabha* - fragrance; *ākta* - anointed with; *sa* - He; *muñcan* - leaves behind; *mṛgayati* - searches; *tava* - Your; *mārgaṁ* - path; *kṛṣṇa bhṛṅgah* - the blackbee (Kṛṣṇa); *yat* - which; *adya* - now.

O Sthalakamalini (land-lotus)! It is fitting that you are laughing very proudly through your flower bunches, since, though all the flowers in the forest are anointed with fragrance, the blackbee Kṛṣṇa leaves them now to search for you only!

Explanations: Rūpa Mañjarī and Tulasī were peeking inside a cave of Govardhana Hill to enjoy a glimpse of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa's sweet love play, at the climax of which Kṛṣṇa fainted of love-excitement. The transcendental youthful Cupid of Vṛndāvana is beside Himself of ecstasy because of the wonderful ingredients of Śrī Rādhā's *mādana mahā bhāva.* Śrī Rādhikā becomes very proud of Her victory, accepting the mood of *madīyatā* (Kṛṣṇa is mine) in which the heroine controls the hero. (In the *tadīyatā* mood - I am His - the hero controls the heroine) She proudly goes out of the *kūñja* into a neighboring *kuñja* where She makes Her girlfriends relish the *parihāsa rasa* (transcendental flavour of laughter and humour), laughing Her *vara hāsya* (exquisite laugh) and saying: "The beautiful One is Mine!" Meanwhile, Kṛṣṇa arises from His ecstatic swoon and, not seeing His Priyājī anywhere, anxiously starts looking around for Her. Through a window in the cave Rūpa Mañjarī and Tulasī relish the sweet sight of Sundara's (beautiful Kṛṣṇa's) wonderful emotions when He cannot see their Svāminī. For the maidservants Kṛṣṇa is most beautiful when He is anxious to meet Śrī Rādhā[3]. With the brushes of their love they make a picture of this eagerness on the canvases of their hearts and carry it to Śrī Rādhā to show it to Her when She is separated from Śyāmasundara. In this way they render wonderful *prasaṅga*-service to Śrīmatī. How blessed they are that they can say: "O Rādhe! Out of separation from You Śyāma is also very upset!"

vasati vipina vitāne tyajati jhaṭiti dhāma
luṭhati dharaṇī śayane bahu vilapati tava nāma

"For Your sake He has given up His beautiful home and lives in a forest-abode! He rolls around on the bed of the earth and loudly laments, crying out Your name!" (Gīta Govindam)

tuyā patha cāi, rāi rāi boli,
gada gada vikala parāṇa
kṣaṇa eka koṭi, koṭi yuga mānato,
hari vallabha paramāṇa

[3]This pastime is described by Śrī Kiśora Gopāla Gosvāmī, the eldest son of Śrīla Ānanda Gopāla Gosvāmī.

"He looks down the road for You to come, saying "Rāi! Rāi!" with faltering voice and agitated heart, and He thinks one moment without You lasts a million ages!" Although Sundara looks in all four directions He cannot find His Priyājī, so He gets up from the play-bed and comes out of the cave to have a good search for Her. Then the wind of Vṛndāvana carries the full weight of Śrī Rādhikā's fragrance into His nostrils and tells Him: "Ogo black bee! Don't be upset! The land-lotus is not far away anymore!" The wind has made his name *gandhavaha* (carrier of fragrances) effective, Madhusūdana's nose can specifically testify of that! When Nāgara eagerly runs after that fragrance, eager to meet His Priyājī, He meets Padmā and Śaibyā, the girlfriends of Rādhikā's arch-rival Candrāvalī, on the way. They try to lure Him away, but He ignores them and continues His search for Śrī Rādhikā, casting His glances in the direction where He smells Her delectable scent. Rūpa Mañjarī and Tulasī secretly follow Nāgara and become very proud of their Svāminī's prestige when they see how eager He is to meet Her. Suddenly Nāgara notices that Rūpa and Tulasī are following Him and He comes to them and asks them with folded hands: "O Rūpa! O Tulasi! Your mistress tricked Me and is hiding out somewhere, leaving Me behind! Although I can smell Her fragrance I cannot see Her! You must certainly know where My beloved is! Quickly take Me to Her!" That is the speciality of the maidservants of Śrī Rādhikā: That Supreme Person, who is sought for by the Vedas, is now folding His hands before Rādhikā's *kiṅkarīs* (maidservants), and humbly prays to them: "Come, arrange for My meeting with your Svāminī, I have no other shelter but you girls!" Blessed is the position of Rādhā's *kiṅkarīs* !

Seeing the anxiety of our Hero, Rūpa and Tulasī leave Him standing there and go to the *kuñja* where Svāminī is laughing and joking with Her girlfriends about Her victory and Kṛṣṇa's defeat[4].

In this way Tulasī offers *sarasa vandanā* (witty praises) to her *iṣṭa-deva* (favorite deity), standing before her Svāminī. This is also called *maṅgalācaraṇa*, or an auspicious invocation. As is customary in Vaiṣṇava-tradition the opening verse of a devotional book is a prayer to the *guru* and the second verse is a prayer to the *iṣṭa-deva* (favorite deity).

granthera prārambha kori maṅgalācaraṇa; guru vaiṣṇava bhagavān tinera smaraṇa
tinera smaraṇe hoy vighna vināśana; anāyāse hoy nija vāñchita pūraṇa (C.C.)

"In the beginning of this book I make a *maṅgalācaraṇa* in which I remember the Guru, the Vaiṣṇavas and the Lord. Remembrance of these three will destroy all obstacles to spiritual life and will easily fulfill all sacred desires."

In the first verse Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī, in his *svarūpāveśa*, reveals the super-excellence of his *guru* through some *rasika* joking kind of praise, and in this second verse he reveals the super-excellence of his *iṣṭa-devī* Śrī Rādhikā in the same way.

Rūpa and Tulasī enter into the *kuñja* and, seeing a landlotus before them, praise Svāminī by saying: "O land-lotus, it's fitting that You laugh so proudly, for the Kṛṣṇa-bee leaves all the other fragrant flower-like *gopīs* to search for You only!" There, in the transcendental *śṛṅgāra rasa* (amorous)-kingdom of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa, everything is full of jokes and laughter: *kathā gānaṁ nāṭyaṁ gamanaṁ* (Brahma Saṁhitā) "In the spiritual Goloka-world every word is a song and every step is a dance." Can there be any doubt then that the words and activities of the *sakhīs* and *mañjarīs*, who are non-different from the Yugala Kiśora, that always swims in the ocean of *śṛṅgāra rasa*, are also filled with the *śṛṅgāra parihāsa rasa* (the flavours of erotic humour)? The *rāga-bhakti* practitioner will also become qualified to make such transcendental romantic jokes if he engages in hearing and chanting of these sweet sentiments, gradually becoming completely absorbed in them.

[4]This pastime is described by Śrī Kiśora Gopāla Gosvāmī.

The fact that Svāminī is here addressed as 'land-lotus', indicates that She is not close to the Śyāma-ocean of *rasa* (the word *kamala* means water-flower (*ka* = water and *mala* = dirt), but She's named *sthala-kamalinī*, landlotus, here), but Tulasī uses this word to encourage the Rādhā-landlotus to go into the ocean of Śyāma (to go and meet Him) and she herself also very much likes to witness that sweet meeting[5].

The words *garvitā kānane'smin* show that Śrī Rādhā's pride of Her fortune of being Śyāmasundara's most dearly beloved in Śrī Vṛndāvana is justified, because She alone is endowed with the unique *mādana mahā bhāva*. The words *api nikhila latā stā saurabhākta sa muñcan mṛgayati tava mārgaṁ kṛṣṇa-bhṛṅgo yad adya* show that Kṛṣṇa clearly abandoned Candrāvalī's assistants Padmā and Śaibyā on the way. Although Candrāvalī and other Yūtheśvarīs (*gopī*-groupleaders) are clearly scented with the fragrance of *mahā bhāva* the *mādana mahā bhāva* of Śrīmatī Rādhikā is most capable of subduing the Kṛṣṇa-blackbee; that is shown in this verse. Some consider this verse to be Śrīpāda's addressing Śrī Rūpa Mañjarī in *svarūpāveśa.* This explanation is also endorsed by the *mahātmas.* When Śrī Rūpa Mañjarī heard herself praised in the first verse, a smile blossomed on her face. Seeing this, Tulasī addressed a blooming landlotus before her and praised her *gurudevī* once more by revealing the glories of her beauty and fortune. Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī glorifies the beauty of the *mañjarīs* as follows in his 'Kṛṣṇa Bhāvanāmṛta' (3.2):

tā vidyud udyuti jayi prapadaika rekhā vaidagdhya eva kila mūrtibhūtas tathāpi
yūtheśvarītvam api samyag arocayitvā dāsyāmṛtābdhim anusasnur ajasram asyāḥ

"Each line on these *mañjarīs*' toes defeats the bright splendour of the lightning. They are cleverness personified and although they are qualified to be *yūtheśvarīs* (*gopī*-groupleaders) they have no taste for this at all. They are always immersed in the nectar-ocean of Śrī Rādhikā's service." In other words, they are always so enthusiasic about their devotional service that they even consider friendship with Śrī Rādhā to be insignificant. Although Śrī Rādhā is her superior, Tulasī (Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī) makes light jokes with Her here in his *svarūpāveśa*, as if she's equal to Her, calling Her *sakhī*, and at the same time reveals Her boundless glories.

ayi sthalakamalini, vṛndāraṇya puṣpamaṇi,
puṣpa-guccha vikāśera chale.
hāsyakara atiśaya, yukti-yukta tāhā hoy,
tāi sabe garavinī bole.

"Ayi landlotus, jewel of all flowers of Vṛndāvana! On the pretext of making your cluster of flowers blossom you're laughing excessively! This is justly done, hence everyone calls you *garavinī,* proud girl!"

yehetu se kṛṣṇa-bhṛṅga, tyaji anya latā-saṅga,
yadi-o sugandhi-yuta sab
tava patha anveṣaṇa, koriteche anukṣaṇa,
ihātei sājiche gaurava.

"Because this Kṛṣṇa-bee leaves all the other vines' company, although they are all very fragrant, and constantly searches down the road for You You have become very proud!" (Śrī Rasika-Candra dāsa)

[5]This point is made by Śrī Kiśora Gopāla Gosvāmī.

VERSE 3:

VRAJENDRA VASATI STHALE VIVIDHA BALLABĪ SAṄKULE
TVAM EVA RATI MAÑJARI PRACURA PUṆYA PUNJODAYĀ
VILĀSA-BHARA VISMṚTA PRAṆAYI MEKHALĀ MĀRGAṆE
YAD ADYA NIJA NĀTHAYĀ VRAJASI NĀTHITĀ KANDARAM

vrajendra - the king of Vraja; *vasati sthale* - in the abode; *vividha* - different kinds; *ballabī* - cowherdgirls; *saṅkule* - in the group; *tvam* - you; *eva* - only; *rati mañjari* - Rati Mañjari; *pracura* - abundant; *puṇya* - fortune of great love; *puñja* - abundance; *udaya* - the arising; *vilāsa* - love pastimes; *bhara* - absorbed; *vismṛta* - forgotten; *praṇayi* - beloved; *mekhalā* - belt; *mārgaṅe* - for searching out; *yad* - which; *adya* - now; *nija* - own; *nāthayā* - by the Queen; *vrajasi* - you go; *nāthitā* - requested; *kandaram* - to a cave.

O Rati Mañjari! You are the most fortunate cowherdgirl in the abode of the king of Vraja! When Your mistress (Śrī Rādhikā) forgets Her beloved sash of bells due to absorption in Her loveplay, She asks You to fetch it from the cave where She left it!

Explanations: The spiritual visions flow on like an unbroken stream for Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī, who is in his *svarūpāveśa*. In the first verse he made luscious jokes about the love-marks of Śrī Rādhikā that were reflected on Rūpa Mañjarī's lips when she saw the amorous pastimes of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa, thus offering *rasika* praises to his *guru*, and in the second verse Rādhikā met Her girlfriends in another *kuñja*, leaving Her lover in an amorous swoon after Their amorous pastimes, and made many jokes about it with them in the wonderfully intoxicated mood of *madīyatā*. Tulasī praises her mistress in a joking way. She consoles the anxious Hero, who is suffering separation from His beloved, and brings Him into the *kuñja* after telling Svāminī how eager He is to meet Her, seats Him next to Her on Her throne in the assembly of *sakhīs* and relishes the sweetness of the Yugala Kiśora, the youthful Couple of Vraja.[6]

kanakera latā yeno tamāle beḍilo;
nava ghana mājhe heno vijurī paśilo
rāi kānu rūpera nāhiko upāma;
kuvalaya cāṅd milalo eka ṭhāma

"There's no comparison to Rāi and Kānu's forms; They are like a golden vine entwining a Tamāla-tree, a lightning strike entering a fresh monsoon cloud, or a blue lotus flower meeting the moon at one place."

Śrī Raghunātha dāsa's mind is absorbed in the sweet *rasa* of the meeting of the Yugala Kiśora. For Śyāmasundara's happiness Prāṇeśvarī thinks of a new pastime, so She orders Her girlfriends to dance for Him. Her highest aim is to make Śyāmasundara happy:

kṛṣṇake āhlāde - tāte nāma hlādinī;
sei śakti dvāre sukha āsvāde āpani

[6] This point is made by Śrī Kiśora Gopāla Gosvāmī.

"The potency which makes Kṛṣṇa happy is named *hlādinī*. Through this energy He (Kṛṣṇa) Himself relishes happiness" (Caitanya Caritāmṛta Madhya 8, 157)

Śrīmatī Rādhā serves all the innumerable forms of God with *śṛṅgāra rasa* through Her own particles and expansions (*aṁśa-kalā*), that appear as so many divine consorts.

tāra madhye vraje nānā bhāva rasabheda; kṛṣṇake korāya rāsādika līlāsvāde
govinda-nandinī rādhā govinda-mohinī; govinda-sarvasva - sarva kāntā śiromaṇi

"Amongst all these kinds of consorts there are different moods and flavours in Vraja, that make Kṛṣṇa relish the flavour of pastimes such as the Rāsa-dance. Rādhā delights Govinda, Rādhā enchants Govinda and Rādhā is everything to Govinda - hence She is the crownjewel of all the consorts of the Lord."

Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī comments on this: *anyatra svāṁśa lakṣmyādi-rūpeṇa śrī kṛṣṇāṁśa viṣṇvādīnāṁ krīḍā-sahāyaṁ karoti vraje tu kāya-vyūha prakāśaiḥ saha svayaṁ rūpā śrī rādhā svayaṁ rūpaṁ śrī kṛṣṇaṁ bahutara prakāreṇa rasam āsvādayatīty arthaḥ.* "Outside of Vraja, for instance in the innumerable Vaikuṇṭha-planets and in abodes like Mathurā and Dvārakā, Kṛṣṇa's Viṣṇu-expansions and His appearances like Vāsudeva are being assisted in Their pastimes by countless goddesses of fortune and different Queens, but in Vraja Śrī Rādhā and Her different *gopī*-expansions make the Original Supreme Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa relish the sweetness of erotic mellows in so many ways." Kṛṣṇa, in His topmost feature as Vrajendra-nandana, the prince of Vraja, is also known as *rasika śekhara,* the crownjewel of all relishers, who is always very greedy for relishing sweet mellows, and He relishes the pinnacle of bliss in His pastimes with the Śrīla Vrajadevīs (the most beautiful girls of Vraja), who make Him relish their most blissful and luscious forms, scents and flavours, that are scented with the love-mellows known as *mahā bhāva*.

On Śrīmatī's indication the *sakhīs* begin to dance on the courtyard of the *kunja*. How wonderful is the sweetness of their artistic dancing! They are nondifferent from Premamayī Śrīmatī, and they give a wonderful joy to the Youthful Couple with their dancing, which is full of *prema rasa*. The *sakhīs* show unlimited expertise in dancing with their light, yet fast dancing steps. Their waists are naturally thin, and when you see how expertly they change their sides in their dancing postures it looks as if their vine-like bodies are breaking in two. Their sprout-like hands are swinging like sprouts on vines that are trembling in the wind, their veils slip from their heads and their shining jewelled earrings are dangling on their cheeks. They look very beautiful as their braided hair and sashes loosen in the swing of the dance and they sing vernal songs (*vasanta rāga*) that incite erotic feelings and that describe the sweetness of the Divine Couple.

raṅgiṇī-gaṇa rasa raṅgahi naṭai;
raṇaraṇi kaṅkaṇa kiṅkiṇī raṭai
rahi rahi rāga racaye rasavanta;
rati-rata rāgiṇī ramaṇa vasanta
raṭati ravāva mahati kapināsa;
rādhā ramaṇa karu muralī vilāsa

"The playful *gopīs* dance in a *rasika* way, making their anklebells and waistbells jingle. They compose *rasika rāgas* and the spring becomes the husband of the *rāginī* (female musical mode) which is attached to Rati (the wife of Cupid). Different kinds of *vīṇās* and stringed instruments like the Ravāva and Mahati are played while Rādhā Ramaṇa plays His Muralī-flute."

Śyāma very sweetly plays His Muralī-flute and the *sakhīs* give the rhythm with the jingling of their anklebells, bangles and sashes with bells. Sometimes Śyāma stops playing His

flute and praises the *sakhīs*. Meanwhile Śrīmatī, who sits on Śyāma's left side on the jewelled throne, notices that She does not have Her sash of bells on anymore. She had dropped them in the mountain/cave while being absorbed in Her loveplay with Kṛṣṇa! When Her *sakhīs* see this, they will make jokes about Her, therefore, without being noticed by others, Śrīmatī gives a hint to Tulasī to secretly go back to the cave to fetch the sash of bells, and to put it on back on Her waist without being noticed by others. Tulasī immediately goes back to that cave, on the pretext of picking flowers, and nobody but Rūpa Mañjarī notices it. Rūpa Mañjarī understands Tulasī's purpose, and mercifully blesses her with this praise of her glories, as a joking reply to Tulasī's initial praise of her in verse One. In a lonely place Rūpa tells Rati Mañjarī: "O *sakhi* Rati Mañjari![7] In Vraja there are many *gopikās*, but of them you are the most fortunate one, because our mistress orders you alone to go back to the cave where She has left Her sash of bells because of absorption in loving pastimes, and to fetch them! You're very fortunate to be blessed with such an intimate service!"

This sash of bells is called *praṇayi* here, or beloved, because it maddens our Hero (Kṛṣṇa) with its sweet jingling when Svāminī walks, dances or plays intimate sports with Him. Such a beloved ornament is not so easily forgotten, but today, in the climax of the amorous sports, Svāminī nevertheless forgot them. The greatness of these loving pastimes is that Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa are very eager to make Each other happy!

prīti viṣayānande tad āśrayānanda; tāhā nāhi nija sukha vāñchāra sambandha
nirupādhi prema yāhā - tāhā ei rīti; prīti viṣaya sukhe āśrayera prīti {C.C.}

"The happiness of the abode of love is the happiness of the object of that love. This is not a relationship of desire for personal happiness, it is one of causeless love. The reservoir of love becomes happy when the object of love is happy." This causeless love is the natural cause of these pastimes being so glorious. After hearing the truth about Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa from Rāmānanda Rāya, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu said:

prabhu kohe - jānilo kṛṣṇa rādhā prema tattva
śunite cāhiye doṅhāra vilāsa mahattva

The Lord said: "Now I know about Kṛṣṇa's and Rādhā's Divine Love. I like to hear about the glories of Their pastimes now."

rāya kohe - kṛṣṇa hoy dhīra lalita; nirantara kāmakrīḍā - yāhāra carita
rātri dina kuñje krīḍā kore rādhā saṅge; kaiśora vayas saphala koilo krīḍā raṅge

Śrī Rāmānanda Rāya replied: "Kṛṣṇa is called Dhīra Lalita (one who is clever, of fresh youthful beauty, expert in joking, free from worries and who is controlled by the love of His dearest *gopīs*). He always engages in erotic pastimes, that is His nature. Day and night He plays with Rādhā in the groves of Vraja, and in this way He makes His adolescence successful."

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[7] Śrīpāda Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī's *siddha svarūpa*-name is 'Rati Mañjarī' and her nickname is 'Tulasī Mañjarī'. In Śrīla Gopāla Guru Gosvāmīpāda's Paddhati (manual) (*śloka* 469-472) it is written-

ratyambujākhyaḥ kuñje'stīndulekhā kuñja dakṣiṇe. tatraiva tiṣṭhati sadā surūpā rati mañjarī
tārāvalī dukūleyaṁ taḍit tulya tanu-cchabiḥ . dakṣiṇā mṛdvikā khyātā tulasīti vadantī yām
asyā vayo dvimāsāḍhya hāyanāstu trayodaśa . pitāsyā vṛṣabhaḥ kānto divākhyaḥ śāradā prasūḥ

"In the *kuñja* known as Ratyambuja (the lotus of Rati), south of Indulekhā's *kuñja,* the beautiful Rati Mañjarī always resides. Her dress is decorated with a cluster of stars and her body shines like lightning. She has a mild, submissive nature and is nick-named 'Tulasī'. She is 13 years and two months old. Her father is Vṛṣabha, her husband Diva and her mother is named Śāradā."

(C.C. Madhya 8, 187, 189) How wonderful are the glories of these pastimes! Who can describe the greatness of that power that awakens an irrepressible greed for tasting such perfectly delectable sports with His dear *gopīs* in the *kuñjas* in the Supreme Brahman, the embodiment of full transcendental bliss, God Himself, day and night? Urged by Their insatiable divine desires, Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa float in innumerable directions on the stream of their transcendental pastimes. They greatly desire to make Each other happy, completely forgetting Their personal interest, so it is not so astonishing that in this consciousness Śrī Rādhikā forgot Her sash of bells, however dear it may be to Her. But She cannot ask Her girlfriends to bring it back, for they'll make jokes about Her. But the maidservants are as close to Her as Her very life and body, so She has nothing to hide from them, and of all of them again She finally picks Rati (or Tulasī) for doing this service. Śrīmatī Rūpa Mañjarī's heart is sprinkled with the nectar of love for Rati Mañjarī, so there's no limit to her bliss when she sees that Rati Mañjarī gets the honour of fetching the sash of bells.

Tulasī gets the sash from the cave and comes back to Svāminī at the time when the *sakhīs* have stopped dancing. The *kinkarīs* begin to gladden the *sakhīs* by fanning their sweat-anointed bodies and everyone is absorbed in different nice *rasika* conversations. Tulasī uses this opportunity to put the belt back on Svāminī's waist without being seen by the others. Tulasī's service makes Svāminī very happy! Absorbed in his spiritual identification Śrī Raghunātha dāsa writes this verse, understanding it is the merciful blessing of his (her) *guru* Rūpa Mañjarī upon him (her).

Śrī Rasika-Candra Dāsa sings:

he sakhi rati mañjari, tumi ei vrajapurī
mājhe mahā sukṛti-śālinī.
vrajendra-vasati-sthāne, tava sama nāhi jāne,
tumi gopīkula śiromaṇi.

"O *sakhi* Rati Mañjari! In this Vraja-dhāma you are very fortunate! I don't know anyone who is your equal in the abode of the king of Vraja; you are the crownjewel of all cowherdgirls!"

rasa-vilāsera bhare, vismṛta mekhalā tare,
nijeśvarī ājñā-mate tumi.
anveṣite hārā dhane, coliteche sayatane,
girirāja kandarākhya bhūmi

"When your mistress forgot Her sash-of-bells, being absorbed in Her *rasika* pastimes, She ordered you to go and diligently search for Her lost wealth in or around a cave of Govardhana Hill."

VERSE 4 :

PRABHUR API YADUNANDANO YA EṢA
PRIYA YADUNANDANA UNNATA PRABHĀVAḤ
SVAYAM ATULA KṚPĀMṚTĀBHIṢEKAṀ
MAMA KṚTAVĀṀS TAM AHAṀ GURUṀ PRAPADYE

prabhuḥ - master; *api* - even; *yadu-nandanaḥ* - Yadunandana Ācārya; *yaḥ* - who; *eṣaḥ* - he; *priya* - dear; *yadunandana* - Kṛṣṇa, the son of the Yadus; *unnata* - elevated; *prabhāvaḥ* - power; *svayaṁ* - himself; *atula* - matchless; *kṛpā* - mercy; *amṛta* - nectar; *abhiṣekaṁ* - showered; *mama* - mine; *kṛtavāṁs* - did; *tam* - to him; *ahaṁ* - I; *guruṁ* - to my teacher; *prapadye* - I take shelter.

I take shelter of my teacher Yadunandana Ācārya, who is so powerful because he is so dear to Yadunandana Śrī Kṛṣṇa, and who personally showered me with the nectar of his matchless mercy.

Explanations: Now Śrīla Raghunātha's absorption in his spiritual identity as Rati Mañjarī ends temporarily, and in his external absorption he praises his initiating *guru* Yadunandana Ācārya. But even this so-called 'external' absorption of his is spiritual, because he is a direct associate of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. How humbly and eagerly Raghunātha praises his *guru* here! How sweet is his remembrance of his *guru*'s mercy upon him! *śrī guru caraṇe rati, ei se uttama gati, ye prasāde pūre sarva āśā* "Attachment to Śrī Guru's lotus feet is the supreme goal and by his grace all desires are fulfilled" (Narottama Dāsa Ṭhākura). Raghunātha dāsa was mad with love for Śrī Gaurāṅga Mahāprabhu, and although he repeatedly tried to escape from his father's captivity to join Mahāprabhu in Nīlācala (Purī) his father caught him every time again. Day and night there were five guards, four servants and two *brāhmaṇas* engaged in keeping Raghunātha at home. On the one hand there was Mahāprabhu's powerful mercy attracting him, and on the other hand there was the bondage of his household life, which was like a miserable jail; words cannot describe Raghunātha's great anguish. One day Śrī Yadunandanācārya came to Śrī Raghunātha and set him free, on the pretext of giving him some household duty. The *ācārya* had a *brāhmaṇa*-disciple who was serving the family-deity, but the *brāhmaṇa* had abandoned this service. The *ācārya* took Raghunātha dāsa along to search for the *brāhmaṇa*, speaking about the need to engage him in the deity-service all along the way.

ardha-pathe raghunātha kohe gurura caraṇe; āmi sei vipre sādhi pāṭhāibo tomā sthāne
tumi sukhe ghara yāho, more ājñā hoy; ei chale ājñā māgi korilo niścoy

"When they were halfway Raghunātha said to his *guru*'s lotus feet: "I will get the *brāhmaṇa* back and send him to you; you just blissfully go home!" In this way he assured himself of his *guru*'s permission. At the end of the night everyone was sleeping, and Raghunātha saw this as a good opportunity to go to Nīlācala and surrender completely to Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu's lotus feet. His *gurudeva* had personally come to free him from the hard knot of material life, and in this way he had sprinkled him with the matchless nectar of his mercy. One may ask then: How could Raghunātha be successful in devotional life by disobeying the order of his *guru* (failing to show up with the renegade *brāhmaṇa*?) The answer is: Raghunātha understood that his *guru*'s supreme order, to renounce materialistic life and to

surrender to Mahāprabhu, was far more important than the insignificant order to get the *brāhmaṇa*-priest back. Prince Raghunātha was Yadunandanācārya's beloved disciple and he became free from the insurmountable bondage of material life and devoted himself to the lotus feet of Śrī Caitanya, giving the whole world the perfect example of renunciation and devotion. How happy the Guru must have been! Any devotee to whom his devotion is his very life will easily understand which order should have been followed at such an opportune moment. Thus Raghunātha served his *guru* properly, and through it became a great and famous devotee of the Lord. Therefore he writes: *svayam atula kṛpāmṛtbhiṣekaṁ kṛtavān*: "He personally showered me with the nectar of his incomparable grace". As a result of his *guru*'s mercy Raghunātha came to be counted as one of Lord Caitanya's most famous associates. When the Bengali devotees returned from their annual pilgrimage to Purī for the four months of the rainy season, Raghunātha's father asked Śivānanda Sena about news from his son and Śivānanda Sena told him:

śivānanda kohe - tenho hoy prabhura sthāne; parama vikhyāta tenho, kevā nāhi jāne
svarūpera sthāne tāre koriyāchen samarpaṇa; prabhura bhakta-gaṇera teṅho hoy prāṇa sama
rātri dina kore teṅho nāma saṅkīrtana; kṣaṇa mātra nāhi chāḍe prabhura caraṇa
parama vairāgya - nāhi bhakṣya paridhāna; yaiche taiche āhāra kori rākhaye parāṇa

"Śivānanda said: "Yes, he is with the Lord and he is most famous; who does not know him? The Lord placed him in Svarūpa Dāmodara's care and he is the very life of the devotees there! He's chanting the holy name day and night and he does not leave the feet of the Lord for even a moment! He is most renounced, he hardly dresses or eats. Somehow or other he keeps himself alive!"

The *guru*-principle (*guru tattva*) is explained by the use of the words *priya yadunandana unnata prabhāvaḥ:* he became very powerful because he is so dear to Lord Yadunandana (Kṛṣṇa). The *guru* is a wonderful combination of Godhead and devotee, the appearance of God in the form of a pure devotee:

yady api āmāra guru caitanyera dāsa; tathāpi jāniye tānre tāhāri prakāsa

"Although my *guru* is a servant of Lord Caitanya, I still know that he is a direct manifestation of Him." (C.C. Ādi 4,45)

sākṣād dharitvena samasta śāstrair uktas tathā bhavyata eva sadbhiḥ
kintu prabhor ya priya eva tasya vande guroḥ srī caraṇāravindaṁ

"I praise the lotus feet of my *guru* who, according to all the scriptures and the great saints, is Lord Hari Himself, but who is still dear to the Lord, being His pure devotee." (Gurvaṣṭakam, Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartīpāda) When the aspirant-devotee sees the pure devotional behaviour of the *guru*, getting a profound inner faith in him, he understands that he is the Lord's dear devotee and serves him with garlands and foodstuffs that are leftover by the Lord. Considering him to be nondifferent from God does not mean that one should offer things to him that are not first offered to the Lord. Nor should one consider the *guru* to be just another devotee, but one should see him as the mercy-incarnation of the Lord, and in that respect nondifferent from the Lord. Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī writes in Bhakti Sandarbha (237): *tat prasādo hi sva sva nānā pratikāra dustyājyānartha hānau parama bhāgavat prasāda siddhau ca mūlam*. "The mercy of the topmost devotee is the root cause of destruction of those bad habits that the practitioner could hardly give up through many of his own endeavours."

kṛpāmaya dīkṣā-guru, prema-bhakti kalpataru,

śrī yadunandana nāma yāra
śrī kṛṣṇera priya ati, tāra pade rahu mati,
janme janme prabhu ye āmāra.
unnata prabhāva-yuta, kṛpāmaya adbhuta,
prema-bhakti dātā śiromaṇi
mo'heno adhama jane, kṛpāmṛta variṣaṇe
abhiṣiktā korilā āpani

"My *dīkṣā-guru*, named Yadunandanācārya, is full of mercy, like a wishyielding tree of *prema*. Let my mind stick at his lotus feet, for he is very dear to Śrī Kṛṣṇa. He is my master, birth after birth. He is endowed with advanced spiritual powers, he is wonderfully merciful and he is the crownjewel of bestowers of loving devotion, who singlehandedly showered a fallen soul like me with the nectar of his mercy."

VERSE 5:

YO MĀṂ DUSTARA GEHA NIRJALA MAHĀKŪPĀD APĀRA KLAMĀT
SADYAḤ SĀNDRA DAYĀMBUDHIḤ PRAKṚTITAḤ SVAIRĪ KṚPĀ RAJJUBHIḤ
UDDHṚTYĀTMA SAROJA NINDI CARAṆA PRĀṆTAṂ PRAPADYA SVAYAṂ
ŚRĪ DĀMODARA SĀCCAKĀRA TAM AHAṂ CAITANYA-CANDRAṂ BHAJE

yaḥ - he; *māṁ* - me; *dustara* - hard to cross; *geha* - household; *nirjala* - waterless; *mahā* - great; *kūpāt* - from the well; *apāra* - boundless; *klamāt* - from misery; *sadyaḥ* - suddenly; *sāndra* - deep; *dayā* - mercy; *ambudhiḥ* - ocean; *prakṛtitaḥ* - by nature; *svairī* - independent; *kṛpā* - mercy; *rajjubhiḥ* - with the ropes; *uddhṛti* - redeemed; *ātma* - His own; *saroja* - lotus flowers; *nindi* - defeating; *caraṇa* - feet; *prānta* - tips; *prapadya* - taking shelter; *svayaṁ* - personally; *śrī dāmadora* - Śrīla Svarūpa Dāmodara; *sāccakāra* - accepting; *taṁ* - of Him; *ahaṁ* - I; *caitanya candraṁ* - the moonlike Lord Caitanya; *bhaje* - I worship.

I worship the moonlike Lord Caitanya, who, with the ropes of His mercy, suddenly pulled me out of the deep waterless well of household life, which is so difficult to come out of, and is full of limitless suffering, gave me shelter at the tips of His feet, that defeat the beauty of lotus flowers, and entrusted me into the care of Śrī Svarūpa Dāmodara.

Explanations: In his external absorption Śrī Raghunātha dāsa now praises most merciful Śrīman Mahāprabhu, by whose grace he became disgusted with all the royal opulence that is desired by worldly people. When one tastes the transcendental mellows of pure devotion one considers even liberation or the bliss of Brahman to be insignificant, what to speak of royal opulence? *mahāprabhura bhakta-gaṇera vairāgya pradhāna; yāhā dekhi prīta hoy gaura bhagavān* (C.C.) "Renunciation is very important for the devotees of Mahāprabhu; when Lord Gaura sees His devotees' dispassion He is very pleased." After instructing Sanātana Gosvāmī on the truths about devotion Lord Caitanya sent him to Vṛndāvana, saying: *kāṅthā karaṅgiyā mora kāṅgāla bhaktagaṇa; vṛndāvane āile tāra koriho pālana* (C.C.) "My devotees are very

poor, having only torn quilts and small waterpots. When you come to Vṛndāvana you should protect and maintain them", and in the Caitanya Candrodaya Nāṭakam it is said that after taking *sannyāsa* the Lord personally told Śrī Advaita Ācārya: *vinā sarva tyāgaṁ bhavati bhajanaṁ nahyasupate* "Without renouncing everything one cannot properly worship Kṛṣṇa." This is certainly not the Lord's own concoction, because it is also described in Śrīmad Bhāgavata, which is considered to be the essence of the Vedānta, that the devotees who renounce everything surrender to the Lord wholeheartedly:

ye dārāgāra putrāpta prāṇān vittam imaṁ paraṁ
hitvā māṁ śaraṇaṁ yātāḥ kathaṁ taṁs tyaktum utsāhe

The Lord told Durvāsā Muni: "How can I let down My devotee who has given up wife, house, sons, relatives and wealth to take shelter of Me?" (Śrīmad Bhāgavata 9.4.65)

Śrīla Rāghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī is an eternal associate of Śrīman Mahāprabhu, but still he practised severe austerities and renunciation along with tender loving devotion, just to give the perfect example to the practising devotees and to illuminate their devotional paths.

Before offering his flower-like lamentations to Śrīmatī Rādhārānī's lotus feet, Śrī Raghunātha's body and mind are illuminated by the effulgence of Śrīman Mahāprabhu's compassion, and he praises the lotus feet of this most merciful Lord by saying that He is *prakṛtitaḥ sāndra dayāmbudhiḥ*, naturally a deep ocean of mercy. Remembering the Lord's mercy, through which he began to feel the burning suffering of household life, considering his opulences, that were like those of the heavenly king Indra, and his wife, who was as beautiful as an angel, to be like the biting poison of a snake or a scorpion, and his household-life to be a blind waterless well, Raghunātha's mind is startled. Through the loving punishment of Nitāi Cāṅd, who is nondifferent from Mahāprabhu and whose body melts with feelings of compassion, he got the signal from Mahāprabhu that it was time for him to renounce household-life and he became the object of the mercy of Mahāprabhu's devotees. Finally Mahāprabhu appeared in the form of his *guru* Yadunandana Ācārya and helped him to escape from household-life by making him fetch the house-priest at the end of the night. In this way the Lord pulled Raghunātha out of the miserable blind well of household-life with the ropes of His mercy. Being pulled at by the ropes of the Lord's mercy, Raghunātha managed to reach the lotus feet of the Lord at Puruṣottama (Puri) within twelve days, without sleeping or eating. There Raghunātha's burning heart was soothed by the shade of Mahāprabhu's feet, that defeat the beauty of lotus flowers!

svarūpādi gosāī āchen bosiyā; heno kāle raghunātha mililā āsiyā
aṅgane dūre rahi koren praṇipāta; mukunda daṭṭa kohe - ei āilā raghunātha
prabhu kohe - āiso tenho dharilo caraṇa; uṭhi prabhu kṛpāya tāre koilo āliṅgaṇa
svarūpādi sab bhaktera caraṇa vandilo; prabhu kṛpā dekhi sabe āliṅgaṇa koilo
prabhu kohe-kṛṣṇa kṛpā baliṣṭha sabhā hoite;tomāke kāḍhilo viṣaya viṣṭhā garta hoite
raghunātha mone kohe - kṛṣṇa nāhi jāni; tomāra kṛpāya kāḍhilo āmā, ei āmi māni

(Caitanya Caritāmṛta Antya, Chapter 6)

"The Lord was sitting together with Śvarūpa Dāmodara and others when Raghunātha came up to meet Him. Staying at a distance in the courtyard Raghunātha offered his obeisances and Mukunda Datta said: "O, see! Raghunātha has come!" The Lord said: "Come here!" and Raghunātha clasped His lotus feet, but the Lord told him to get up and mercifully embraced him. Raghunātha then bowed down to the feet of Svarūpa Dāmodara and others. All the devotees then embraced him, seeing how much mercy he had gotten from the Lord. The Lord said: "Kṛṣṇa's mercy is stronger than anything, for he has released you from sensual

life, which is like a ditch into which people pass stool!" Raghunātha thought to himself: "I do not know who Kṛṣṇa is; I only know that I was redeemed by Your mercy!"

Śrī Dāsa Gosvāmī says: *svayaṁ śrī dāmodara sāccakāra* "The Lord personally handed me over to Śrī Svarūpa Dāmodara."

Raghunātha, who was used to live like a prince, was tired of travelling. He had hardly eaten and slept on the way, and he felt as if his tender body was on fire.

raghunāthera kṣīṇatā mālinya dekhiyā; svarūpera kohe kṛpā ārdra citta hoiyā
ei raghunāthe āmi soṅpilo tomāre; prabhu bhṛtya rūpe tumi koro aṅgīkāre
tina raghunātha nāma hoy āmāra gaṇe; 'svarūpera raghu' āji hoite ihāra nāme
eto kohi raghunāthera haste dharilo; svarūpera haste tāre samarpaṇa koilo

"Seeing how emaciated and dirty Raghunātha was the Lord's heart melted of compassion and He told Svarūpa Dāmodara: "I have placed this Raghunātha in your care. Please accept him as a master accepts a servant! Now I have three Raghunāthas in My group; from today this one shall be known as 'Svarūpa's Raghunātha'. Saying this, the Lord took Raghunātha's hand and placed it in Svarūpa Dāmodara's hand." Svarūpa held the Lord's order on his head and affectionately embraced Raghunātha once more. Raghunātha dāsa had been so eager to see Mahāprabhu that he came to Purī without eating or sleeping, forgetting about his body and his home. Seeing Raghunātha's tarnished face Bhakta-vatsala Mahāprabhu told His personal servant Govinda to give Raghunātha some *prasāda* of Lord Jagannātha after he had taken a bath in the ocean and had taken *darśana* of Lord Jagannātha in the temple. Then the Lord went to perform His noontime duties. The devotees were astonished to see how sweetly and mercifully the Lord had received Raghunātha and they praised his fortune again and again. Raghunātha took *prasāda* from Govinda for five days, and then he thought it better for a renounced devotee to go out begging for his meals near the Lion-gate of the Jagannātha-temple. Hearing of Raghunātha's renounced behaviour from Govinda, the Lord was unlimitedly happy.

śuni tuṣṭa hoiyā prabhu kohite lāgilā; bhālo koilo vairāgī dharma ācarilā
vairāgī koribo sadā nāma saṅkīrtana; māgiyā khāiyā kore jīvaṇa rakṣaṇa
vairāgī hoiyā yebā kore parāpekṣā; kārya siddhi nahe, kṛṣṇa koroye upekṣā
vairāgī hoiyā kore jihvāra lālasa; paramārtha yāya tāra, hoya rasera vaśa

"The Lord was very satisfied and said: "He has done well to adopt such a renounced life! A renunciant should always chant the holy name and keep himself alive simply by begging some food. If a renunciant becomes dependent on others he will not attain perfection and Kṛṣṇa will not help him. If a renunciant desires to gratify his tongue his spiritual life will be ruined, because he becomes controlled by the flavours of this world." One day Raghunātha, being a mine full of jewels of humility, inquired from Mahāprabhu, through Svarūpa Dāmodara, what his duties were. The Lord smiled and said: "Even I don't know the truth about the means and the goal as well as Svarūpa does. He's instructing even Me in these things! Nevertheless, if you have any faith in My words, then listen and I will tell you something in short:

grāmya kathā nā śunibe grāmya vārtā na kohibe; bhālo nā khāibe āra bhālo nā poribe
amānī mānada kṛṣṇa nāma sadā lobe; vraje rādhā-kṛṣṇa sevā mānase koribe

"Don't speak any mundane topics and don't listen to them either. Don't eat nicely and don't dress nicely. Always chant the holy name of Kṛṣṇa, not expecting any honour from anyone and giving all honour to everyone, and mentally serve Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa in Vraja."

These nectarean instructions emanated directly from the lotus-mouth of the Lord, and they were revealed by Śrīpāda Svarūpa Dāmodara. After receiving these nectarean instructions Raghunātha dāsa offered his obeisances unto the Lord's lotus feet and the Lord embraced him with love before handing him once more to Svarūpa Dāmodara. Being showered by a stream from the deep ocean of the Lord's mercy, Rāghunātha, who was a mine with innumerable jewel-like qualities, gradually developed an extraordinary detachment and loving devotion that is quite unique and new in the transcendental annals of the devotional tradition. Śrī Raghunātha gave up begging at the Lion-gate and began to visit the poor-relief, considering this to be better for his spiritual development. The Lord was very pleased with Raghunātha's decision and gave him a stone from Govardhana Hill and a string of *guñjā*-beads, ordering him to worship them in a pure and simple way with water and Tulasī-leaves. Śrī Śaṅkarāraṇya Sarasvatī had brought these things from Vṛndāvana and had presented them to the Lord. The Lord had personally offered a wonderful worship to the stone and the string for three years before He gave them to Raghunātha dāsa.

dui apūrva vastu pāiyā prabhu tuṣṭa hoilā; smaraṇera kāle gale pore guñjā mālā
govardhaner śilā kabhu hṛdaye netre dhare; kabhu nāsāy ghrāna loya, kabhu loya śire
netra jale sei śilā bhije nirantara; śilāke kohena prabhu 'kṛṣṇa kalevara'
eimata tina vatsara śilā mālā dharilo; tuṣṭa hoiyā śilā mālā raghunāthe dilo
prabhu kohe - ei śilā 'kṛṣṇera vigraha'; ihāra sevā koro tumi koriyā āgraha
ei śilāra koro tumi sāttvika pūjana; acirāte pābe tumi kṛṣṇa prema dhana

"The Lord was very happy to get these two wonderful presents. When He was remembering Kṛṣṇa's pastimes or His *mantras* the Lord had the *guñjā-mālā* around His neck. The Lord held the Govardhana-*śilā* before His eyes or on His heart; sometimes He smelled it with His nose and sometimes He held it on His head. He always moistened the *śilā* with His tears of love and said that it was 'the body of Kṛṣṇa'. In this way the Lord kept the string and the rock for three years, and then He gave it to Raghunātha, being pleased with him. The Lord said: "This stone is the form of Kṛṣṇa. Worship it with great care. Offer it a pure worship and you will swiftly attain the treasure of love for Kṛṣṇa."

raghunātha sei śilā mālā yabe pāilo; gosāira abhiprāya ei bhāvanā korilo
śilā diyā gosāi more samarpilā govardhane; guñjā mālā diyā dilā rādhikā caraṇe
ānande raghunāthera bāhya vismaraṇa; kāya mane sevilena gaurāṅga caraṇa

"When Raghunātha received the stone and the string from the Lord, he thought: "By giving me the stone the Lord has offered me to Govardhana Hill and by giving me the string He has offered me to Rādhikā's lotus feet." Out of ecstasy Raghunātha forgot the external world and he served Lord Gaurāṅga's lotus feet with body and mind.

Śrīla Raghunātha's renunciation gradually attained its utmost limits. He now gave up eating from the dole also. The merchants used to throw the *prasāda* of Lord Jagannātha that they could not sell within three days before the cows near the Lion-gate, considering it to be rotten. Even the cows would often be unable to eat this *prasāda* due to the rotten odour that emanated from it, but Raghunātha collected it and washed it with a lot of water before taking the hard inner core and eating it with love and devotion. One day Svarūpa Dāmodara saw Raghunātha engaged like this and prayed to him for some of this *prasāda:*

svarūpa kohe - aiche amṛta khāo niti niti;
āmā sabhāya nāhi dāo ki tomāra prakṛti?

"Svarūpa said: "You always eat such nectar; why don't you give something to us also? What kind of behaviour is this?" Mahāprabhu heard this news from Govinda and personally came there one day and began to take some of this *prasāda* from Raghunātha dāsa also. When Mahāprabhu wanted to take another morsel Svarūpa held His hand and stopped Him, saying: "This is not fit for You!" The Lord was so astonished by the taste of the *prasāda*, which was flavoured by the faithful renunciation and devotion of Raghunātha, that:

prabhu kohe - niti niti nānā prasāda khāi; aiche svāda āra kono prasāde nā pāi
ei mata raghunāthe bāra bāra kṛpā kore; raghunāthera vairāgya dekhi santoṣa antare

"The Lord said: "I always eat all kinds of nice *prasāda*, but I've never tasted such delicious *prasāda* as this!" In this way the Lord bestowed His mercy on Raghunātha again and again, being very satisfied with his dispassion." By the mercy of the Lord Raghunātha dāsa became so detached from his body that he was able to remain absorbed in his *bhajan* twenty-two-and-a-half hours a day and spend the remaining hour and a half sleeping. On some days he would not even sleep that much, and even if he slept he dreamt of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa! He followed Mahāprabhu's orders to the letter and thus gave a wonderful example of *bhajan* to the whole world. For this reason all the practising devotees still remember him with the utmost faith and devotion.
Śrī Haripada Śila sings:

jaya jaya śacīra nandana!
prema kalpataru vara, hema kānti kalevara,
veda vedya puruṣa ratana

"All glories to the son of mother Śacī, who is the wish-yielding tree of *prema*, whose body shines with golden splendor and who is the jewellike Supreme Lord who is both knowledge and that which is to be known."

sudustara geha rūpa, nirjalāndha mahākūpa,
nipatita dekhiyā tathāya
sadya kṛpā rajju dvāre, uddhāra korilā more,
patita pāvana gorā rāya

"Seeing me fallen in the dark waterless well of household life, which is so hard to climb out of, He pulled me out with the ropes of His compassion. Hence Lord Gorā can justly be called the saviour of the fallen!"

vinindita śata dala, gaura pādapadma tala,
yathā bhakti makaranda jhare
nija pade gaurahari, sthāna diyā kṛpā kori,
samarpilā svarūpa dāmodara

"The honey of devotion trickles from the footsoles of Lord Gaura, that defeat the beauty of lotus flowers. Gaurahari has mercifully given me shelter at these lotus feet and has submitted me to Svarūpa Dāmodara."

heno kṛpāmbudhi ye, parama īśvara se,
śrī kṛṣṇa caitanya candra nāma
bhakata vatsala prabhu, bhaji āmi mahāprabhu,
nitya kori ananta praṇāma

"This Supreme Lord, who is the ocean of mercy, is named Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya Candra. I worship that Mahāprabhu, who is so kind to His devotees, and always offer Him innumerable obeisances."

bhāgavata cūḍāmaṇi, raghunātha dāsa gosvāmī,
vilāpa kusumāñjali granthe.
nijābhīṣṭa pūrṇa tare, maṅgalācaraṇa kore,
vandi gaura caraṇāravinde

"In his book Vilāpa Kusumāñjali the crownjewel of devotee-saints, Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī, makes an auspicious invocation by praising Lord Gaura's lotus feet for the fulfillment of his sacred aspirations!"

VERSE 6:

VAIRĀGYA YUG BHAKTI-RASAṀ PRAYATNAIR
APĀYAYAN MĀM ANABHĪPSUM ANDHAM
KṚPĀMBUDHIR YAḤ PARA DUḤKHA DUḤKHĪ
SANĀTANAṀ TAṀ PRABHUM ĀŚRAYĀMI

vairāgya - renunciation; *yuk* - connected with; *bhakti* - devotion; *rasaṁ* - nectarean taste; *prayatnaiḥ* - carefully; *apāyayat* - made drink; *mām* - me; *anabhīpsum* - unwilling; *andham* - blind; *kṛpāmbudhiḥ* - ocean of mercy; *yaḥ* - who; *para* - of others; *duḥkha* - misery; *duḥkhī* - was sorry; *sanātanaṁ* - Sanātana Gosvāmī; *taṁ* - him; *prabhum* - lord; *āśrayāmi* - I take shelter.

I take shelter of my lord Sanātana Gosvāmī, who was an ocean of compassion and who always felt sorry for the suffering of others. Although I was unwilling and blinded by ignorance, he diligently made me drink the nectar of devotion laced with renunciation.

Explanations: In this verse Śrī Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī praises his instructing teacher Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī, another one of Mahāprabhu's eternal associates. Because he is an eternal associate of the Lord loving devotion and renunciation of sense-gratification is Raghunātha's innate wealth.

sāḍe sāta prahara yāya yāhāra smaraṇe; āhāra nidrā cāri daṇḍa seho nahe kona dine
vairāgyera kathā tāra adbhuta kathana; ājanma nā dilo jihvāya rasera sparśana
chiṇḍā kāni kāṅthā vinu nā pore vasana; sāvadhāne koilo prabhura ājñāra pālana

"He remembered Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa twenty-two and-a-half hours a day and spent the rest of the time eating and sleeping, and sometimes he would not even do that. The story of his renunciation is wonderful. From his very birth he never allowed his tongue any sense-gratification. He wore only an outer cloth and a torn-up quilt and he carefully followed the Lord's orders." {C.C. Antya 6} Despite all this Raghunātha was also a mine of humility, so he

still prayed to Sanātana Gosvāmī: "I was blinded by ignorance, so I was unwilling to relish the nectar of devotion, but Sanātana Gosvāmī feels very sorry for such suffering souls and he made me drink this nectar of devotion coupled with dispassion." Śrīmat Sanātana Gosvāmī is the embodiment of devotion and dispassion. Śrīpāda Kavi Karṇapūra wrote:

gauḍendrasya sabhā vibhūṣaṇa maṇis tyaktvā ya ṛddhām śriyaṁ
rūpasyāgraja eṣa eva taruṇīṁ vairāgya lakṣmīṁ dadhe
antar bhakti rasena pūrṇa hṛdayo bāhye'vadhūtākṛtiḥ
śaibālaiḥ pihitaṁ mahāsara iva prīti pradas tad vidām

(Caitanya Candrodaya Nāṭaka 9.45)

"Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī's older brother (Sanātana Gosvāmī) was the jewel in the assembly of Hussain Shah, the king of Bengal, but he gave up that royal goddess of fortune to embrace the young fortune-goddess of dispassion (i.e. He gave up all royal opulence and became a renunciant). His heart was filled with the mellows of devotion, though externally he dressed like an *avadhūta* (a lawless, wild man), so he could be compared with a great pure lake covered by moss, giving divine love to all those who know about devotion." Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī used to consider Śrīla Raghunātha Dāsa to be his best friend and helper. He himself declared that at the opening of his Śrī Bṛhat Toṣaṇī-commentary:

rādhā kṛṣṇa prema viśeṣa puṣṭo gopāla bhaṭṭo raghunātha dāsaḥ
syatām ubhau yatra suhṛt sahāyau ko nāma so'rtho na bhavet susiddhaḥ

"Who can not attain perfection, having two friends and helpers like Gopāla Bhaṭṭa and Raghunātha Dāsa, who are particularly mature in their love for Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa?" At the end of his Laghu Toṣaṇī commentary on Śrīmad Bhāgavata Śrīmat Jīva Gosvāmī also called Śrī Raghunātha the friend of Śrī Rūpa and Sanātana:

yan mitraṁ raghunātha dāsa iti vikhyātaḥ kṣitau rādhikā-
kṛṣṇa prema mahārṇavormi nivahe ghūrnan sadā dīvyati
dṛṣṭānta prakara prabhābharam atityaivānayor bhrājator
yas tulyatva padaṁ matas tribhuvane sāścaryam āryottamaiḥ

"Raghunātha Dāsa has become worldfamous for being the friend of Śrī Rūpa and Sanātana. He always swims in the waves of the great ocean of love for Rādhikā and Kṛṣṇa. The greatest saints say that no one in the world can be compared with Rūpa and Sanātana, but amazingly enough Raghunātha Dāsa has attained a position equal to theirs!" Despite this, Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa, being a mine of humility, considers Rūpa and Sanātana to be his superiors, and prays to their lotus feet as follows:

yadīccher āvāsam vrajabhuvi sarāgaṁ pratijanur
yuva dvandvaṁ tac cet paricaritum ārād abhilaṣeḥ
svarūpaṁ srī rūpaṁ sagaṇam iha tasyāgrajam api
sphuṭaṁ premnā nityaṁ smara nama tadā tvaṁ śṛṇu manaḥ

(Manaḥ Śikṣā - 3)

"O mind! If you desire to live in Vraja birth after birth and if you want to serve the eternally youthful Couple (Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa) there, then always lovingly remember and offer your

obeisances to Śrīla Svarūpa Dāmodara, Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī and his devotees as well as his older brother Śrī Sanātana."

It is said *raghunāthera niyama yeno pāṣāṇera rekhā* "The discipline of Raghunātha dāsa is like the lines that are carved in a stone." The lines that are carved in a stone can never be removed, and similarly Raghunātha dāsa would never swerve from his vows even slightly. The first of the ten vows he made in his Sva Niyama daśakam was:

gurau mantre nāmni prabhuvara śacī-garbhaja pade
svarūpe śrī rūpe gaṇa-yuji tadīya prathamaje
girīndre gāndharvā sarasi madhupuryāṁ vrajavane
vraje bhakte goṣṭhālayiṣu param āstām mama ratiḥ

"May I love mostly my Guru, the holy name of Kṛṣṇa, the lotus feet of the son of mother Śacī (Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu), Svarūpa Dāmodara, Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī and his disciples and his older brother (Sanātana Gosvāmī), Govardhana Hill, Śrī Rādhākuṇḍa, Mathurā, Vṛndāvana, Vraja, the devotees and the residents of Vraja." Śrī Raghunātha dāsa actually came to Vraja (after the disappearance of Śrīman Mahāprabhu and Svarūpa Dāmodara) to commit suicide by jumping from Govardhana Hill, but Sanātana Gosvāmī, who is suffering when others are unhappy, and who is an ocean of mercy, saved his life.

caitanyera agocare, nija keśa chiṅdi kore,
virahe ākula vraje gelā.
deha tyāga kori mane, gelā giri govardhane,
dui gosāi tāhāre dekhilā

dhari rūpa sanātana, rākhilā tāra jīvana,
deha tyāga korite nā dilā.
dui gosāi ājñā pāiyā, rādhākuṇḍa taṭe giyā,
vāsa kori niyama korilā

(Pada Kalpataru)

"When Lord Caitanya became unmanifest Raghunātha shaved his head and went to Vraja, greatly agitated by feelings of love-in-separation. Wanting to commit suicide he went to Govardhana Hill, where he saw the two Gosvāmīs Rūpa and Sanātana, who saved his life by forbidding him to commit suicide. On the order of these two Gosvāmīs Raghunātha went to the bank of Rādhākuṇḍa and settled down there, practising a strict devotional discipline."

Śrī Sanātana Gosvāmī said: "Raghunātha! The mercy of *guru* and Gaurāṅga is everything to us! I also wanted to commit suicide once by throwing myself before the wheels of Lord Jagannātha's chariot, but Lord Caitanya, who is the Inner Overseer, knew what was on my mind and he forbade me to do it, saying:

sanātana! deha tyāge kṛṣṇa yadi pāiye; koṭi deha kṣaṇeke to chāḍite pāriye
deha tyāge kṛṣṇa nā pāi, pāiye bhajane; kṛṣṇa prāpti upāya kono nāhi bhakti vine
deha tyāgādi ei sab tamo dharma; tamo rajo dharme kṛṣṇera nā pāiye marma

(Caitanya Caritāmṛta Antya chapter 4)

"Sanātana! If I could attain Kṛṣṇa by committing suicide I would give up millions of bodies in a flash! But you cannot get Kṛṣṇa simply by committing suicide, You can only attain Him by doing *bhajana*! Other than devotion, there is no way to attain Kṛṣṇa! Suicide is a dark,

passionate activity through which you can never attain the transcendental Kṛṣṇa." "Therefore, O Raghunātha! For the sake of Śrī Gaurānga's love, remain patient, take shelter of the bank of Rādhākuṇḍa and do *bhajana* there!" On Sanātana Gosvāmī's order Śrī Raghunātha gave up the plan to commit suicide and became absorbed in the *rasa* of his *bhajana* on the banks of Rādhākuṇḍa. In Bhakti Ratnākara it is said:

eka dina sanātana vṛndāvana hoite; ethā āilā śrī gopāla bhaṭṭera vāsāte
mānasa pāvana ghāṭe colilen snāne; dekhe - eka vyaghra jala piye seikhāne
raghunātha dhyānāveśe āchen bosiyā; vyāghra vane gela tāra nikaṭa hoiyā
kotokṣaṇe raghunātha cāhe cāri pāne; dekhena śrī sanātana āisen snāne
bhūmite poḍiyā sanātane praṇamilo; sanātana snehāvaśe āliṅgaṇa koilā
raghunātha prati snehe kohe dhīre dhīre; vṛkṣatala hoite ebe rohibe kuṭire
jānāiya viśeṣa gosvāmī gelā snāne; kuṭīrera ārambha hoilo sei dine
anya hita hetu raghunātha sei hoite; rahilena kuṭīre gosāira ājñā mate

"One day Sanātana Gosvāmī came here (to Rādhākuṇḍa) from Vṛndāvana to visit Śrī Gopāla Bhaṭṭa. When he came to the bathing place (on the northern bank of Śyāmakuṇḍa) named Mānasa Pāvana Ghāṭa (where Śrī Rādhikā daily takes Her bath before worshiping the Sungod) he saw one tiger drinking water there. Raghunātha Dāsa sat there, absorbed in meditation, while the tiger passed him, going into the forest. After a while Raghunātha Dāsa looked in all four directions and saw that Śrī Sanātana had come there for his bath. He fell to the ground to offer his obeisances to Sanātana Gosvāmī, who affectionately embraced him. Gently and affectionately Sanātana Gosvāmī told Raghunātha Dāsa: 'Leave the base of this tree now and stay in a hut from now on!' After making this very clear, Sanātana Gosvāmī went for his bath. From that day on the *kuṭīra*-system began (the Vaiṣṇavas at Rādhākuṇḍa now live in small cottages instead of in the open air). From then on, for the benefit of others, Raghunātha Dāsa stayed in a hut, on the order of Sanātana Gosvāmī."

Remembering the love and compassion of Sanātana Gosvāmī, Raghunātha dāsa says: "I take shelter of my master Sanātana Gosvāmī, who was an ocean of compassion and who always felt sorry for the suffering of others. Although I was unwilling and blinded by ignorance, he diligently made me drink the nectar of devotion laced with renunciation".
Śrīla Haripada Śila sings:

jaya jaya śrīpāda śrī prabhu sanātana; gaura kṛpā-pātra yini boḍo mahājana
bhāgavata anugata bhakti-grantha yoto; sarva śāstra mūrtimān mahā bhāgavata
para duḥkha duḥkhita ye karuṇā sāgara; abhilāṣa hīna yini vairāgya bhaskāra
ajñānāndha more dekhi karuṇā korilā; parama vairāgya yukta bhakti-rasa dilā
sei sanātana prabhu mora śikṣā guru; sarvadā āśraya kori prema kalpataru
dāsa gosvāmī kore śubha maṅgala smaraṇa; haripada bhajana sampad rasāyana

"All glories to Śrīpāda Sanātana Gosvāmī prabhu, who is the great object of Lord Gaura's mercy! His books are followed by all the great devotees (or: his books are all written in allegiance to the Śrīmad Bhāgavata); indeed, he is the embodiment of all the scriptures and he is the greatest devotee! He is an ocean of compassion who felt sorry for all those who are suffering and he was like the shining sun of detachment, completely free from personal desires! Seeing me blinded by ignorance he was merciful to me and gave me the divine nectar of devotion coupled with the greatest detachment. This Sanātana prabhu is my instructing teacher and I always take shelter of him, the wishyielding tree of divine love. Dāsa Gosvāmī's auspicious introduction to Vilāpa Kusumāñjali is the elixir and the treasure of Haripada's *bhajan*."

.

VERSE 7:

ATY UTKAṬENA NITARĀṀ VIRAHĀNALENA
DANDAHYAMĀNA-HṚDAYĀ KILA KĀPI DĀSĪ
HĀ SVĀMINI KṢAṆAM IHA PRAṆAYENA GĀḌHAM
ĀKRANDANENA VIDHURA VILAPĀMI PADYAIḤ

ati - extreme; *utkaṭena* - great; *nitarāṁ* - always; *viraha* - separation; *analena* - by the fire; *dandahyamāna* - being burned; *hṛdayā* - a girl's heart; *kila* - indeed; *kāpi* - some; *dāsī* -maidservant; *hā* - alas!; *svāmini* - mistress; *kṣanaṁ* - for a moment; *iha* - here; *praṇayena* - with love; *gāḍham* - intense; *ākrandanena* - by crying; *vidhurā* - suffering; *vilapāmi* - I lament; *padyaiḥ* - with verses.

O Svāmini (my mistress Rādhe)! The heart of this maidservant constantly burns in a great fire of separation from You. Being thus afflicted, and crying with great love, I lament in the following verses!

Explanations: In the first three verses Śrīla Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī offered prayers in his spiritual identity, in the next three verses in his external identity, and from this verse on he will offer one flower-like lamentation after the other to Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī's lotus feet, absorbed in his spiritual identity of Rati or Tulasī Mañjarī. This full transcendental absorption in Rādhā's maidservant-hood has now completely swallowed all his other absorptions. His external absorption is also not mundane, since he is an eternal associate of Mahāprabhu, but he has now forgotten even his internal absorption! How wonderfully deep is his absorption in his pure service to Śrī Rādhā! He has no other support than Śrī Rādhā's feet, that's why his heart burns so much out of separation from Her! *utkaṭa virahānala* – A severe fire of separation! He declares himself to be helpless and he cannot live anymore without submitting this to Her. He only misses Śrī Rādhārāṇī, there is nothing else he misses. He simply laments: "O Premamayi Rādhe (You who are full of divine Love)! Where are You? I am Your maidservant, and You are all that I long for! I only like Śyāmasundara because He's Your lover! I've fully surrendered myself unto You! Listen once to my lamentation and please notice me!" The more the time of Śrī Raghunātha's *aprakaṭa kāla* (passing away) approaches, the more he becomes absorbed in his *mañjarī svarūpa* and the more eager he becomes to see and serve Śrī Rādhā as a *mahā premavatī sevikā* (greatly loving maidservant). The flames of this high fire of love-in-separation are bursting out from this Vilāpa Kusumāñjali. On the one hand the heartbreaking cries and lamentations that are caused by this great pain of separation defeat the depth of even the deepest ocean, and on the other hand they mock the fierceness of the highest and most fiercely burning flames.

One may ask now how this kind of apparent agony can be recognised as the goal of life, since all goals of life are supposed to be blissful. It is natural that someone who has no experience with *prema* (love of God), especially Vraja-*prema*, will ask such a question. Although the feelings of separation from Kṛṣṇa appear to be miserable they are actually a special culmination of transcendental ecstasy. *prema* has two bodies - one is meeting and the other is separation. Consequently, the loving devotees always swim in the ocean of very painful love-in-separation as well as in the ocean of most blissful love-in-meeting. These feelings can

never be compared to the ordinary feelings of joy and sorrow that are experienced in this material world; only experienced devotees know this.

ei prema yāra mone, tāra vikrama sei jāne,
yeno viṣāmṛta ekatra milana

"Anyone who has this *prema* in the heart knows its power. It is like a mixture of poison and nectar." (C.C. Madhya 2,51) In this connection Śrīmat Sanātana Gosvāmī has written in his Bṛhat Bhāgavatāmṛta (1.7.125-126):

prāg yady api premakṛtāt priyānāṁ viccheda dāvānala vegato'ntaḥ
santāpa jātena duranta śokā-veśena gāḍham bhavatīva duḥkhaṁ
tathāpi sambhoga sukhād api stutaḥ sa ko'py anirvācyatamo manoramaḥ
pramoda-rāśiḥ pariṇāmato dhruvaṁ tatra sphuret tad rasikaika vedyaḥ

"Although the heart of the loving devotee initially burns in the forest fire of apparent misery and lamentation because of separation, still this is ultimately a joy that is even greater than the transcendental bliss of meeting Kṛṣṇa, an indescribably beautiful abundance of ecstasy. Only the *rasika* devotees (who are able to taste the flavours of transcendental emotions) know this in truth." Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī gives an example in his own commentary on this verse: *yathāgni pratiyogī ghana himādi sparśena padādy aṅgeṣu jāyamāna parama mahā jāḍyasya jvalad aṅgāra sparśavad abhijṣa syāt. tatra hi yathāṅgāra sparśa pratītir mithyā parama mahā jāḍyam eva satyaṁ tathātrāpi duḥkhasya pratīter mithyātvam eva sukhasyaiva satyatvaṁ vijñeyaṁ.* "Just as the feet and other limbs, when they are touched by ice, which is just the opposite of fire, feel as if they are burned by charcoal, and on the other hand one feels great frigidity upon being touched by burning charcoal, similarly the apparent suffering from feelings of separation is actually not real. It's truly experienced as bliss only."

Therefore we always see so many feelings of love-in-separation for Kṛṣṇa in the people of Vraja. Separation is making their love so elevated and great. They can relish that advanced stage of love, but not all devotees can reach that elevated level of 'blissful pain in separation' of the Vrajavāsīs. Amongst the Vrajavāsīs Śrī Rādhā is again the greatest lover of Kṛṣṇa. When Kṛṣṇa had left Vraja to go to Mathurā, She showed the symptoms of *divyonmāda*, divine madness, the pinnacle of loving ecstasy, that was later also relished by Śrīman Mahāprabhu, who accepted the ecstatic love of Śrī Rādhā while He was in the Gambhīrā at Purī. Of the six Gosvāmīs Śrīla Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī was the only direct witness of Mahāprabhu's astonishing Gambhīrā-*līlā*, and therefore a faint presence of these symptoms of divine love-in-separation is also visible in him. However, these things can not be experienced as long as one identifies oneself with the material body.

Śrī Raghunātha, suffering the pangs of separation from Śrī Rādhā, cries and sighs on the bank of Rādhākuṇḍa: "O Svāmini! I cannot tolerate the pain of separation from You anymore!" How clearly he reveals the tremendous pain of separation he feels in his heart by addressing Rādhārāṇī like this! The language of the heart can only be spoken in solitude. It is the pinnacle of grief. How sweetly Raghunātha Dāsa addresses Rādhārāṇī here, calling Her Svāmini! There is an absorption in intoxication in this address. There's not even a whiff of bodily awareness in Raghunātha's mind; he is now Tulasī Mañjarī. The practising devotees should also fix themselves on their *svarūpāveśa*, for no one can get a response from Svāminī without being being totally free from *māyā*. As soon as the mind wanders off elsewhere, it is as if Svāminī runs away, saying: "First become mine! When you fully surrender yourself to Me you must stick to Me like My shadow, and then you will get My response!" Śrī Raghunātha becomes overwhelmed while he is crying, and he reveals his heartache through these verses. "O Svāmini! I don't have anyone else but you in this world! With whom else should I stay? I

cannot carry the burden of life anymore without seeing You and serving You!" In this way Śrī Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī was in the same condition as Mahāprabhu when He wept: *tomāra darśana vine, adhanya ei rātri dine, ei kāla nā yāya kāṭāna* "Without seeing You, these days and nights are miserable and this time cannot be passed."

Because of his suffering of separation Śrī Raghunātha himself writes: *kāpi dāsī*. "I am Your fallen maidservant, that's why my heart is burning in want of Your personal service!" The mood of the maidservants is identical with Rādhārāṇī's mood. Just as Rādhikā is the personification of full *mahā bhāva*, so Her maidservants are the personifications of *sevā rasa* (the flavour of service). Their *svarūpas* (intrinsic conditions) are made of this service-flavour. No one understands Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa's wishes as well as they do, that's why they suffer so much when they are deprived of their devotional service. No one else is as qualified to understand, to catch experience of what are Svāminījī's innermost feelings but them, not even Svāminī's own girlfriends (*sakhīs*)! One day Svāminī is angry with Śyāma and Kṛṣṇa comes to Her *kuñja*, dressed as a girl, trying to please Her, but Svāminī gives a hint to Tulasī to kick Him out of the *kuñja:*

śaṭho'yaṁ nāvekṣyaḥ punar iha mayā māna dhanayā
viśantaṁ strīveśaṁ subala-suhṛdaṁ vāraya girā
idaṁ te sākūtaṁ vacanam avadhāryocchalita-dhīs
chalāṭopair gopa pravaram avarotsyāmi kim ahaṁ

(Utkalikā Vallarī 59, Rūpa Gosvāmī)

"I will not look at this cheater anymore! I will keep the wealth of My honour! Subala's friend (Kṛṣṇa) has entered My *kuñja*, disguised as a girl! Stop Him!" O Rādhe! When can I, after hearing these anxious words of Yours, stop that best of cowherds from entering?" Tulasī then tells Kṛṣṇa: "O rogue! There are no demons here that You can delude in this enchanting dress like Mohinī! We are Rādhā's *kiṅkarīs*, we can understand all Your tricks! Realize Your own deceitfulness and get out of this *kuñja*!" *iṅgite bujhibo sob kāj* (Narottama Dāsa Thākura): 'I will understand all my duties simply on Their hints.' Even Kṛṣṇa could not understand Rādhikā's innermost feelings, that's exactly why He became Gaura. His three wishes in this direction were unfulfilled, that's why Śyāmasundara became Gaura. A greed arose in Him to understand the greatness of the love of His Preyasī (beloved), so He relished it with the help of Her mood and complexion. You cannot know how heavy a weight is just by looking at it; you have to take it on your shoulders! When Kṛṣṇa understood the weight of His Preyasī's love He ended up in a severe condition (in Gaura-*līlā*)!

romakūpa raktodgama, danta sab hāle; kṣaṇe aṅga kṣīṇa hoy, kṣaṇe aṅga phule
gambhīrā bhitore rātrye nāhi nidrā lava; bhittye mukha śira ghaṣe - kṣata hoy sab

"Blood oozed from the pores of His skin and His teeth loosened; sometimes His body was emaciated, and sometimes it bloomed (blew) up. He did not even get a moment of sleep within the Gambhīrā-cell; He rubbed His face against the wall and became completely bruised."

kāhā nāhi śuni ye ye bhāvera vikāra; sei bhāva hoy prabhura śarīra pracāra
hasta padera sandhi yoto vitasti pramāṇe; sandhi chāri bhinna hoy carma rahe sthāne
hasta pada śira sab śarīra bhitore; praviṣṭa hoy - kūrma rūpa dekhiye prabhure {C.C.}

"The Lord's body was filled with ecstatic transformations that were unheard of! All the joints of His fingers and toes were disconnected; only His skin stayed in its place (they were only held together by the skin). Sometimes, again, the Lord's hands, feet and head withdrew into His trunk and He looked just like a tortoise." This was the condition of the Supreme Lord,

the full nondual truth, when He went to realize Rādhā's ecstatic love for Him! However, the *kiṅkarīs* understand everything naturally! They can understand what Svāminī needs during Her pastimes with Kṛṣṇa and they know what pastimes will be played, so they go ahead of the Divine Couple and decorate the *kuñja* accordingly before They get there. They make a bed for only one person to lie on, with one pillow - they know by experience what pastime will be performed! The *sakhīs* know that the *kiṅkarīs* have entrance into the intimate pastimes, they engage them accordingly: *lalitā ādeśa pāiyā, sevana koribo jāiyā, priya sakhī saṅge harṣa mone* (Narottama Dāsa Ṭhākura) "Receiving the order from Lalitā I will blissfully go to do my service along with my dearest girlfriends." The mood of the maidservants is identical with *mahā bhāva*. Śrī Rādhārāṇī consists of *mahābhāva;* She is the very Cintāmaṇi-jewel that fulfills all of Kṛṣṇa's desires: *sei mahā-bhāva hoy cintāmaṇi sāra; kṛṣṇa vāñchā pūrṇa kore - ei kārya yāra* (C.C.) "This *mahā-bhāva* is the quintessence of the Cintāmaṇi-gem of love of God, and it serves to fulfill all of Kṛṣṇa's desires." The maidservants are like the Cintāmaṇi-stones that fulfill the desires of both the Couple, therefore Kṛṣṇa pitifully prays to them for Rādhārāṇī's indescribable mercy.

yasyās te bata kiṅkarīṣu bahuśaś cāṭuni vṛndāṭavī
kandarpaḥ kurute tavaiva kim api prepsuḥ prasādotsavam

(Rādhā Rasa Sudhānidhiḥ - 94)

"O beautiful daughter of king Vṛṣābhanu! Vṛndāvana's transcendental Cupid (Kṛṣṇa) always flatters Your maidservants in so many ways, desiring the festival of Your indescribable mercy!" In the same way Rādhārāṇī takes also shelter of the *kiṅkarīs*, who are nondifferent from Her in heart, when She desires to meet Kṛṣṇa. Within Their minds Śrī-Śrī Rādhā-Mādhava praise the wonderful expertise of those *kiṅkarīs* in their service.

One day, during the Rāsa-dance, Kṛṣṇa plays His flute and Svāminījī dances when one of Her anklebells falls off. The jingling of those anklebells enhances the beauty of Kṛṣṇa's flute song, but now Kṛṣṇa misses their support. Śyāma exposes the sweetness of His own dancing while He places the anklebells back on Rādhā's ankles, unseen by others. He thinks to Himself: "I've not been able to serve Rādhikā as deeply affectionately as Her *kiṅkarīs* do!" Therefore, after relishing the sweetness of Rādhā's Love, Śrīman Mahāprabhu, the all-emotional *avatāra* of God, who is filled with all the different devotional moods, also developed the desire to taste the sweetness of the *mañjarīs*' service after relishing the sweetness of Rādhā's *rasa*![8]

How wonderful is Śrī Raghunātha dāsa's pure absorption in Rādhā's service! He says: *vilapāmi kāpi dāsī* "I am known as Your maidservant, Your real maidservant, and my life burns in the fire of separation from You!" We also do *bhajana* in allegiance to the *ācāryas*, therefore we must also somehow attain this condition. "I may be unqualified, but he who has offered me to Your lotus feet for Your maid service is Your qualified maidservant. Why will You not accept someone who is given to him? When merciful Śrī Gurudeva offers me to Your lotus feet, You have to accept me." *guru kṛṣṇa-rūpa hon śāstrera pramāṇe; guru-rūpe kṛṣṇa kṛpā koren bhaktagaṇe* (C.C.). "The scriptures prove that the *guru* is a form of Kṛṣṇa. Kṛṣṇa bestows His grace on the devotees in the form of the *guru*." "This is in another way a gift of Your lover–can You refuse that?" Śrīmat Dāsa Gosvāmīpāda's example of *rādhā-niṣṭhā* is to be followed by the surrendered *rasika bhāgavatas.* Bodily consciousness destroys the life of a person like me– *dehe nā koriho āsthā; morile se yama śāstā; duḥkhera samudra karma-gati* (P.B.C.) "Don't place your faith in the material body, for when it dies it is punishable by Yamarāja. The course of *karma* is an ocean of misery."

[8]This pastime is described by Śrīla Ānanda Gopāla Gosvāmī.

In deep *svarūpāveśa* Śrīpāda, whose only life is *rādhā-dāsya,* says: "The fire of separation caused by not seeing You is greatly scorching my heart. I have become very upset from loudly crying!" In this way he reveals that he is burning of anguish inside out. Śrī Raghunātha pitifully prays: 'Hā Svāmini! You are playing in the forest around Rādhākuṇḍa! This *kuṇḍa* is Your favorite place in Vraja! There's no more beautiful place for You and Your Priyatama to play than this one! But I'm so unfortunate that I cannot see You, although I'm living in this forest around Your *kuṇḍa*!' Śrī Raghunātha's mind is startled by seeing the natural beauty and sweetness of Priyājī's form and qualities and by seeing the natural beauty of Rādhākuṇḍa, and He cannot live anymore without directly seeing Her. His life-airs reach his throat because of this separation, so he falls on the bank of Rādhākuṇḍa and laments:

chinna svarṇa vinindi cikkaṇa ruciṁ smerāṁ vayaḥ sandhito
ramyāṁ rakta sucīna paṭṭa vasanāṁ veśena vibhrājitām
udghūrṇac chitikaṇṭha-piñcha vilasad veṇīṁ mukundaṁ manāk
paśyantīṁ nayanāñcalena muditāṁ rādhāṁ kadāhaṁ bhaje

"When will I serve Śrī Rādhā, whose complexion rebukes the splendor of molten gold, who is a smiling girl in Her adolescence, who is beautifully dressed in a glossy, red silken *sārī*, whose braid is as beautiful as the tail of a blissfully dancing peacock and who joyfully casts sidelong glances at Mukunda?" (Utkaṇṭhā daśakam - 1) Sometimes he says:

yasyāḥ kānti tanūllasat parimalenākṛṣṭa uccaiḥ sphurad
gopī-vṛnda mukhāravinda madhu tat prītyā dhayann apy adaḥ
muñcan vartmani vambhramīti madato govinda bhṛṅgaṁ sa tāṁ
vṛndāraṇya vareṇya kalpa-latikāṁ rādhāṁ kadāhaṁ bhaje

"Although the Govinda-bee very much loves to drink the honey (of love) that oozes from the beautiful lotus-faces of the *gopīs*, He suddenly leaves them and wanders here and there over the pathways searching for the best of wish-yielding vines of Vṛndāvana, being attracted to the superexcellent fragrance of Her blissful body. When will I worship that Rādhā?" (Utkaṇṭhā daśakam - 2) And sometimes he again laments, saying:

śrīmat kuṇḍataṭī kuḍuṅga bhavane krīḍā kalānāṁ guruṁ
talpe mañjula malli komala dalaiḥ klṛpte muhur mādhavam
jitvā māninam akṣa-saṅgara vidhau smitvā dṛgantotsavair
yuñjānāṁ hasituṁ sakhīḥ param aho rādhāṁ kadāhaṁ bhaje

"When can I serve Śrī Rādhā, who smiles and engages Her *sakhīs*, with a festival of sidelong glances, in ridiculing Mādhava, the teacher of all artful plays, who is otherwise very proud of His skill in playing, after defeating Him in a game of dice on a bed of lovely soft jasmine-petals in a *kuñja-kuṭīra* on the bank of Her beautiful *kuṇḍa*?" (Utkaṇṭhā daśakam - 3) In this mood Śrī Raghunātha laments in hundreds of different ways for the service and the audience of his mistress: *vilapāmi kāpi dāsī.*

rādhā kṛṣṇa prāpti lāgi sadā utkaṇṭhita; sadā hā hā kāra kṣaṇe sthira nahe cita
anurāga parākāṣṭhā śrī rādhā govinde; divā niśi nāhi jāne matta premānande

"Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī was always very eager to attain Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa, always lamenting without being peaceful at heart for even a moment. He was supremely attached to Śrī Rādhā Govinda, and because he was mad with loving ecstasy he did not know whether it was day or night." (Bhakti Ratnākara)

The service of Śrī Rādhā is *bhāva grāhya*, only understood with (the proper) feeling. The experience of the sweetness and beauty of this service is incomparable! Kṛṣṇa is the embodiment of all nectarean flavours and Śrī Rādhā is the embodiment of the full *mahā bhāva*. Mahābhāva Svarūpinī Śrī Rādhā makes Rasika Śekhara (the king of relishers) Kṛṣṇa, who is also called *rasa brahman*, the delectable transcendence, relish the full sweetness of the erotic transcendental flavour. Śrīmat Rūpa Gosvāmī has written: *ityasyāṁ kṛṣṇa saukhyārtham eva kevalam udyamaḥ* (U.N.) "All the endeavours of the Vraja-*gopīs,* that are endowed with the *samartha rati* (the highest, causeless love for Kṛṣṇa) are meant for Kṛṣṇa's pleasure." In the same way all the endeavours of Rādhikā's maidservants are meant for the pleasure of Rādhā and Mādhava. Indeed, they lose themselves in the ecstasy of the devotional service of the divine Couple and are also blessed with the sweet savour of the Yugala Kiśora. Śrīla Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura exemplifies as follows how the *mañjarīs* relish Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa's sweetness during their service:

hari hari! āra ki emon daśā hobo
chāḍiyā puruṣa deha, kobe vā prakṛti hobo
duhu aṅge candana porābo

"Hari! Hari! When will I give up this male body and become a female, applying sandalpaste to Their bodies?"

ṭāniyā bāndhibo cūḍā, nava guñjāhāre beḍā,
nānā phule gāṅthi dibo hāra
pīta-vasana aṅge, porāibo sakhī saṅge,
vadane tāmbūla dibo āra

"I will tie a crown on Kṛṣṇa's head and place a string of *guñjā*-beads on it, I will string a garland of different flowers, dress Kṛṣṇa in His yellow *dhotī*, along with the *sakhīs*, and place betel-leaves in His mouth."

duhu rūpa manohārī, dekhibo nayana bhari,
nīlāmbare rāi sājāiyā
nava ratna jari āni, bādhibo vicitra veṇī,
dibo tāhe mālatī gāṅthiyā

"I will fill My eyes with Their enchanting forms. I will dress Rāi in a blue *sārī* and I will bind a wonderful braid for Her with a string of new jewels and a garland of Mālatī-flowers."

se nā rūpa mādhurī, dekhibo nayana bhari,
ei kori mane abhilāṣa
jaya rūpa sanātana, deho more ei dhana,
nivedaye narottama dāsa

(Prārthanā — 32)

"In my mind I desire to fill my eyes with Their sweet forms. Glory to you, Rūpa and Sanātana! Please give me this treasure! This is the prayer of Narottama dāsa!"

An intolerable fire starts burning in the heart of the loving devotee when he misses this devotional service. The best way to worship the Divine Couple Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa is the path shown by Śrī Dāsa Gosvāmī; it is a path of worship that does not depend on anything else but "Where are You, Rādhārāṇi?!" Without seeing Rādhārāṇī's lotus feet the world is empty. The devotee is maddened by Her attractive sweetness and beauty on the one hand and agitated at heart by great anxiety and eagerness on the other hand. According to the great devotees Śrī

Bilvamaṅgala Ṭhākura showed the highest signs of love in a *sādhaka*-body. When he was suffering the pangs of separation from Śrī Kṛṣṇa he said in Kṛṣṇa Karṇāmṛta (63):

kadā nu kasyāṁ nu vipad daśāyāṁ kaiśora gandhiḥ karuṇāmbudhir naḥ
vilocanābhyāṁ vipulāyatābhyām ālokayiṣyan viṣayī karoti

When the Vaiṣṇava-associates of Bilvamaṅgala Ṭhākura tried to console him by telling him that merciful Kṛṣṇa would certainly reveal Himself to him, he said: "Alas! In which more horribly dangerous situation than this one will the adolescent ocean of mercy become visible to us with His wide eyes?" This verse shows that Śrīpāda Bilvamaṅgala's heart was maddened by attraction to Kṛṣṇa's great sweetness on the one hand and by his eagerness to see Him on the other hand.

mādhuryād api madhuraṁ manmathatā tasya kim api kaiśoram
cāpalyād ati capalaṁ ceto bata harati hanta kiṁ kūrmaḥ

"How indescribable is the adolescence of Kṛṣṇa, who is the father of Kāmadeva (Pradyumna), who stirs the mind! He is sweeter than even sweetness itself and naughtier than naughtiness itself! What shall I do? Kṛṣṇa's adolescence steals my heart!" (Kṛṣṇa Karṇāmṛta 65)

Śrī Dāsa Gosvāmī is on the platform of *mahā bhāva*, for he is Vraja's Tulasī Mañjarī, and Śrī Rādhā's service is his very life. Therefore he experiences the highest level of devotional eagerness! Rādhā's devotional service is even more desirable than Kṛṣṇa's devotional service. *rāgānugā bhakti* depends on spiritual greed and this greed arises in the soul, not in the dull material mind. The natural longing for this awakens a strong desire in the *sādhaka* to attain the beloved deity, and this absorption makes the practising devotee forget the mundane world. When one becomes absorbed in one's spiritual identification (*siddha svarūpa*) one can give up one's false identification with the material body. When the devotee has experienced the taste, smell, form, sound and touch of his beloved deity he starts yearning greatly for attainment of his beloved and he always prays: "Your surrendered devotees experience the pinnacle of bliss, but I am so unfortunate that I don't feel anything! O Vṛndātavi! (Vṛndāvana)! Where is that Divine Couple, tell me! In which *kuñja* must I search? I'm calling, but They don't respond! How can I be satisfied?" In this way the practising devotee will slowly attain the stage of divine madness. Only if Svāminī appears sometimes like a lightningflash - only then there will be consolation! How anxiously Śrīla Dāsa Gosvāmī is lamenting! It is as if his heart breaks! How sweetly he says 'Hā Svāmini!' How intense is his desire to be heard by Her! He calls out with all his heart: "Hā Svāmini! This fallen soul has fallen on the bank of Your *kuṇḍa*, giving up all activities, only desiring to see You! You are so playful, listen to my lamentations in these verses while You're playing!"[9] Experiencing this fire of separation Śrī Raghunātha wails and laments:

he svāmini vṛndāvaneśvari!
tomāra virahānale, divā-niśi hiyā jvale,
atyutkaṭa sahite nā pāri

"O Svāmini! O Vṛndāvaneśvari! My heart burns in the fire of separation from You, day and night! It is so intense that I can not tolerate it!"

āmi ye adhama dāsī, sadā duḥkha nīre bhāsi,
hoiyāchi kātara antara

[9] This paragraph is spoken by Śrīla Ānanda Gopāla Gosvāmī.

bosi govardhana pāśe, tomāra daraśa āśe
sevā lāgi kāṅdi nirantara

"I am such a fallen maidservant, always floating on the water of sorrow (or: in my tears of sorrow). Suffering much at heart I am sitting near Govardhana Hill, desiring to see You and crying in want of Your service!"

sakala vyāpara tyāji, tava pade dhyāne sāji
katipaya kavita raciyā
kori ati vilapana, praṇaya amṛta kaṇa
diye more juḍāo āsiyā

"I have given up everything to meditate on Your lotus feet and I have written some poems. I am greatly lamenting, please soothe my heart with one drop of Your nectarean love!" (*padakartā* Śrīla Rasika-Candra Dāsajī)

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VERSE 8:

DEVI DUḤKHA KULA SĀGARODARE
DŪYAMĀṆAM ATI DURGATAṀ JANAM
TVAṀ KṚPĀ PRABALA NAUKAYĀDBHUTAṀ
PRĀPAYA SVA PADA-PAṄKAJĀLAYAM

devi - O Goddess!; *duḥkha-kula* - miseries; *sāgara* - ocean; *udare* - in the middle; *dūyamānam* - afflicted; *ati* - very much; *durgataṁ* - helpless, unfortunate; *janaṁ* - person; *tvaṁ* - You; *kṛpā* - mercy; *prabala* - powerful; *naukayā* - with the boat; *adbhutaṁ* - wonderful; *prāpaya* - make me reach; *sva* - Your; *pada paṅkaja* - lotus feet; *ālayam* - abode.

O goddess! I'm helpless and afflicted in the middle of an ocean of sorrow! Please take me to the wonderful abode of Your lotus feet in the powerful boat of Your mercy!

Explanations: When the mind is very agitated by feelings of separation the loving devotee may feel helpless or unfortunate, unable to make an end to it. Although he feels smashed by the pain of separation he knows there's no other remedy than the direct attainment of Śrī Rādhikā's audience and service. Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī feels as if he is lying in the middle of an ocean of misery, which knows no comparison in this mundane world. No amount of material or spiritual suffering can compare to it. One day Śrī Gaurīdevī (Pārvatī) asked her divine husband Śrīman Mahādeva (Lord Śiva) about the superexcellence of Śrī Rādhā's love and Lord Śiva told her:

lokātītam ajāṇḍa koṭi gam api traikālikaṁ yat sukhaṁ
duḥkhaṁ ceti pṛthag yadi sphuṭam ubhe te gacchataḥ kūṭatām
naivābhāsa tulaṁ śive tad api tat kūṭa-dvayaṁ rādhikā

premodyat sukha duḥkha sindhu bhavayor vindeti bindor api

"O Śive! (Pārvatī) If you would make separate piles of all the happiness and misery of all the three worlds as well as of all the spiritual worlds, it could not be compared with even a drop of the happiness (during meeting) and misery (during separation) that Śrī Rādhikā feels out of Her love for Kṛṣṇa!" (Ujjvala Nīlamaṇi, Sthāyi prakaraṇa - 171) The *kiṅkarīs* also experience some of this happiness and distress, because they are non-different from Śrī Rādhikā at heart and they have some of Her *mahā bhāva* infused in them, and thus if a loving devotee hears even a faint reflection of the high dancing waves that roll on the terrible ocean of Śrī Raghunātha's suffering-from-separation from a distance he will immediately understand: No devotee-aspirant in the world can speak like that. Only a pure devotee can. Then the picture of the sad moonlike face of Śrīman Mahāprabhu, the personification of the *vipralambha rasa* (mood of love-in-separation), as He relished Śrī Rādhā's feelings of separation from Śrī Kṛṣṇa in the Gambhīrā, will be drawn on the slate of his mind.

When the life-airs reach the throat because of strong feelings of love-in-separation then again a vision of the deity may come to the devotee which helps him to stay alive again. Then there's no end to his bliss and he thinks he is close to his beloved again! This constant succession of meeting and separation brings the devotee in an indescribable condition. This is the speciality of the love of Vraja and it is known as the great treasure of the Vraja-*rasa-upāsaka* (practitioner of the flavours of Vraja):

tathedam ānanda bharātmakaṁ vā-thavā mahā śokamayaṁ hi vastu
bhavanti sampatty udayena yasya sadā mahonmatta viceṣṭitāni

"Whether this *prema* is to be known as the greatest bliss (during union) or the greatest sorrow (during separation) cannot be ascertained, but when it arises it makes the devotee always act as if he is completely mad!" (Bṛhad Bhāgavatāmṛta) When the vision of the beloved vanishes, the pain of separation becomes so severe that it wipes the remembrance of the just-experienced bliss of union out of the mind. In such a condition only another such vision can keep the devotee alive. The practising devotee should also have some experience in his *bhajan*. The more experience one has, the more advanced one is. It is shown in Śrīmad Bhāgavata that just by one time conciously offering his obeisances Akrūra Mahāśaya had his spiritual aspirations fulfilled. How much relish is there in one obeisance!

padāni tasyākhila lokapāla kirīṭa juṣṭāmala pāda reṇoḥ
dadarśa goṣṭhe kṣiti kautukāni vilakṣitāny abja yavāṅkuśādyaiḥ
tad darśanāhlāda viviṛddha sambhramaḥ premnordhva lomāśru kalā kulekṣanaḥ
rathād avaskandya sa teṣv aceṣṭata prabhor amuny aṅghri rajāmsy aho iti

Śrī Śukadeva told Mahārāja Parīksit: "O King! From his chariot Akrūra saw the footprints of Kṛṣṇa- marked with the special signs of the lotus flower, barleycorn, elephant-goad and others - on the soil of the meadows of Vraja. The dust of these feet is held by all the maintainers of the universe (the *devas*) on their crowns. Akrūra's ecstatic love and respect increased when he saw these signs, his hairs stood on end and his eyes became filled with tears of ecstatic love. He jumped from his chariot onto the ground and exclaimed: "Aho! How amazing! How amazing!", rolling in that footdust and offering his obeisances." (Śrīmad Bhāgavata 10.38.25-26) Shortly afterwards he had the *darśana* of Kṛṣṇa and Baladeva. In this way we want experience in all the items of devotion! When we see these experiences of a devotee it seems as if the Lord is taking him along by the hand. Can the devotee continue if he does not even get slightly acquainted with his beloved deity? How can we advance towards someone we have never seen, who is beyond our purview? "I could not get aquainted with She

who is everything to me! I never even think of the maidservice of Śrī Rādhā, to whom my merciful Guru has introduced me! My bodily consciousness is so strong, everything is adverse to the mood I desire! What a waste our life is when we don't even get slightly acquainted with She who makes even the supreme Lord of all material and spiritual worlds faint by casting a single sidelong glance at Him!" The practising devotee is drawn towards Rādhārāṇī's lotus feet by his own strong desire to reach them. "Svāmini! If You just once stay in my thoughts or in my dreams, then I will be consoled! Please respond, O Svāmini! Just tell me once 'You are Mine!' I am sitting here, just waiting for that and nothing else!" When the devotee is so anxiously and exclusively waiting, everything else becomes insignificant for him, and he will slowly be drawn to Rādhārāṇī's lotus feet through his experiences. The light that emanates from Śrī Rādhā's toenails will illuminate the heart of any devotee who develops such an indescribable devotion. Kṛṣṇa will come to anyone who meditates on Śrī Rādhikā's lotus feet and who hears and chants about Her, without even being called! *śrī rādhe śrī rādhe vāṇī yei dike yāra mukhe śuni, sei dike dhāya mora mana* "Wherever I hear the words 'Śrī Rādhe Śrī Rādhe!' from anyone's mouth, in that direction My mind runs!" Even the king of lovers, Lāljī (Kṛṣṇa), will be astonished by it! Even He will have to come down. Śrīmad Bhāgavata (1.2.17) says that Śrī Kṛṣṇa sits in the hearts of those who hear and sing about Him and cleanses all material contamination from these hearts, making them worthy places for Him to sit:

śṛṇvatāṁ sva kathā kṛṣṇaḥ puṇya śravaṇa kīrtanaḥ
hṛdy antaḥ stho hy abhadrāṇi vidhunoti suhṛt satām

Svāminī's heart is even softer! According to the *mahājanas* (previous teachers) She says: *āmāra kothā bole yei āmāra mata hoy sei, bosiyā kohinu vṛndāvane* "Anyone who speaks about Me is as I want him/her to be (is pleasing Me very much). This I said, sitting in Vṛndāvana!" Actually, without Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī's mercy Kṛṣṇa can never be attained. Śrīla Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura sings:

rādhikā caraṇa reṇu, bhūṣaṇa koriyā tanu,
anāyāse pābe giridhārī
rādhikā caraṇāśraya, ye kore se mahāśaya,
tāre mui yāi bolihārī

"Anyone who decorates one's body with Rādhikā's footdust easily gets Giridhārī. I praise any great soul who takes shelter of Rādhikā's lotus feet!"

jaya jaya rādhā nāma, vṛndāvana yāra dhāma,
kṛṣṇa sukha vilāsera nidhi,
heno rādhā guṇa gāna, na śunilo mora kāna,
vañchita korilo more vidhi

"Glory, glory to the holy name of Rādhā, that resides in Vṛndāvana, and that is the jewel of Kṛṣṇa's pastimes! Fate has deprived me by not letting me hear the glorification of Rādhā!"

tāra bhakta saṅge sadā, rasa līlā prema kathā,
ye kore se pāy ghanaśyāma
ihāte vimukha yei, tāra kabhu siddhi nāi,
nāhi yeno śuni tāra nāma

"Anyone who associates with Rādhā's devotees and speaks about Her *rasa*, Her pastimes and Her love, will attain Ghanaśyāma (Kṛṣṇa), but anyone who is against this will never attain perfection. Let us not even hear these people's names."

kṛṣṇa nāma gāne bhāi, rādhikā caraṇa pāi,
rādhā nāma gāne kṛṣṇa candra.
saṅkṣepe kohinu kothā, ghucāo monera byathā,
duḥkhamaya anya kathā dhanda

"O brother! When you sing Kṛṣṇa's name you will get Rādhikā's lotus feet and when you sing Rādhā's name you will get Kṛṣṇa-candra. I told you this shortly, so now extinguish the pain in your mind. All other topics are simply miserable!"

Why is Śrī Raghunātha dāsa calling a cowherd girl 'goddess' (*devī*) in this verse? *devī kohe dyotamānā paramā sundarī* {C.C. Ādi 4.84} "Devī" means 'most effulgent' or 'most beautiful'. But this beauty is made of the pinnacle of divine love, otherwise it cannot make Rasika Śekhara (Kṛṣṇa, the king of relishers) happy! This was experienced in a transcendental vision. 'Devī' also means 'worshipable'. By whom is She worshipable? *kiṁ vā kṛṣṇa pūjya krīḍā vasati nagarī* "Or She is the abode of Kṛṣṇa's pastimes of worship." The verbal root '*div*' has several meanings. One of them is '*krīḍā*', or playful. *divyati krīḍati asyām*. Śrī Kṛṣṇa plays in Śrī Rādhā, therefore She is called '*devī*'. Of course Kṛṣṇa also plays in other beloveds, but since Śrī Rādhā is the root cause of all these consorts it is said *vasati nagarī* She is the abode. She is not just Kṛṣṇa's beloved, She is also the object of His worship.

Now the picture of a sweet *līlā* appears in Śrī Raghunātha's mind. Śrī-Śrī Rādhā-Mādhava are enjoying in a *kuṣja* and Tulasī, who is non-different from Svāminī in heart and body, is engaged in fanning Them. During Their amorous pastimes, in which Kṛṣṇa plays the passive role as a qualified hero, Kṛṣṇa faints of ecstasy, overwhelmed by Her *mādana mahā bhāva*, but Anurāgavatī (passionate Rādhikā) is not satisfied. She Herself had enchanted Her qualified hero, and now He doesn't know what to do anymore! During Cupid's festival Svāminī strikes Her hero with Her play-lotus. Tulasī giggles when she sees this and that laughter maddens Śyāmasundara. This is one of the *kiṅkarīs*' matchless services, which can only be experienced by the *rasika* devotees. Svāminī sits up on the bed, Her dress dishevelled, but still effulgent (*dyotamānā*). It is as if sweetness drips from each of Her limbs. Our hero is maddened by that sweetness. *līlā ante sukhe ihāra ye aṅga-mādhurī; tāhā dekhi sukhe āmi āpanā pāsari* (C.C.) "When I see the sweetness of Her body after We made love I am beside Myself of ecstasy!" Svāminī then tells Kṛṣṇa: "O beautiful One! Redress Me before My *sakhīs* come here and make fun of Me!"

Our hero then eagerly sits down at Svāminī's feet, ready to decorate Her.[10] Prāṇeśvarī says: "Smear footlac (red lac worn around the footsoles) around My feet!" Lāljī starts the job, holding Her feet to His chest and getting immersed in their sweetness while looking at them. Impatiently Svāminī says: "What are You doing? Quickly put that lac on! What will My girlfriends say if they see Me like this?" But our Hero sometimes holds Her feet to His chest, sometimes kisses them and sometimes also paints some lac on them with trembling hands, as if He finally found a jewel, but didn't know where to keep it: *aneka yatane, ratana pāiyā, thuite ṭhāī nā pāya*. Some of the wet red lac gets stuck on Śyāma's bluish chest, making it look like the rising sun in the dense darkness, or like a red lotus flower growing in the blackish water of the Yamunā. This blazing red lac of loving Rādhikā's feet defeats the beauty of the Śrīvatsa-sign, the Kaustubha-gem and the golden line that represents the goddess of fortune on Kṛṣṇa's chest![11]

Śyāma is enchanted by the beauty of Śrījī's feet (*jagata mohana kṛṣṇa tāhāra mohinī*, Kṛṣṇa enchants the world, but Rādhikā enchants even Him, C.C.) so She says: "O beautiful

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[10] This is called *śṛṅgāra*, just as the mutual desires of men and women to make love is called *śṛṅgāra: puṁsaḥ striyāṁ striyāḥ puṁsi saṁyogasya ca yā spṛhā; sa śṛṅgāra iti khyāto rati-krīḍādi kāraṇam.*

[11] Kavi Karṇapūra, Alaṅkāra Kaustubha

One! I understand! You cannot do it! Tulasi, come! You put this footlac on!", making Śyāma think to Himself: "Alas! How unqualified I am!" Getting Svāminī's order, Tulasī softly pushes Śyāma and says: "Move up! Through You it can't be done! I'll do it! " Just as Tulasī stretches out her hand to catch Svāminī's feet, the transcendental revelation disappears and she begins to lament, thinking: "Now I'm helplessly falling in an ocean of misery! Your lotus feet are my abode! Please take me there with the wonderful boat of Your mercy, across this ocean of suffering!"[12]

śuno śuno ayi devi śrīmati rādhike! tomara viyoga duḥkha samudra adhikā
āmi to poḍiyā āchi tāhāra udare; satata santapta ati hotechi antare
niralamba tāya āmi nā jāni sāṅtāra; tomāra ye kṛpā mātra bharasā āmāra
ye prabala kṛpā-tarī diyā e samaye; loho tumi nija pada-paṅkaja ālaye

"Listen, listen O Goddess Śrīmatī Rādhike! I have fallen in the middle of the great ocean of misery, caused by being separated from You and my heart is always burning! I am helpless, for I don't know how to swim. Your mercy is My only hope! Now take Me to the abode of Your lotus feet with the powerful boat of Your mercy!" {Śrī Rasika-Candra Dāsa}

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VERSE 9:

TVAD ALOKANA KĀLĀHI DAṀŚAIR EVA MṚTAṀ JANAM
TVAT PĀDĀBJA MILAL LĀKṢĀ BHEṢAJAIR DEVI JĪVAYA

tvad - Your; *alokana* - not seeing; *kāla* - black; *ahi* - snake; *daṁśaiḥ* - by the bites; *eva* - surely; *mṛtaṁ* - died; *janaṁ* - person; *tvat* - Your; *pāda* - feet; *ābja* - lotus; *milat* - meeting; *lākṣā* - footlac; *bheṣajaiḥ* - by the medicines; *devi* - Goddess!; *jīvaya* - revive.

O Goddess! This person has died from the bites of the black snake of separation from You. Please revive me with the medicinal lac that anoints Your lotus feet!

Explanations: In the previous verse Śrīpāda attained the relish of Svāminījī. Now the vision has abated and he feels the intense burning of love-in-separation. Just as someone quickly dies when being bitten by a terrible black snake, being scorched from tip to toe by the intense fire of the poison, Śrī Raghunātha feels like dying when he is burning in the poison of separation from Śrī Rādhārāṇī. Svāminī's footlac is then the only elixer which can revive Tulasī, nothing else can help against this burning fire of separation from Śrī Rādhārāṇī! Even though Śyāmasundara was accompanied by millions of *gopīs* He could not find pleasure without Śrī Rādhā. Suffering separation from Her He went to the bank of the Yamunā and lamented for Her:

[12]From page 33 "When the vision..." upto here the purport is by Śrī Ānanda Gopāla Gosvāmī.

kaṁsārir api saṁsāra vāsanābaddha śṛṅkhalām
rādhām ādhāya hṛdaye tatyāja vraja sundarīḥ
itas tatas tāṁ anusṛtya rādhikām anaṅga bāṇa vraṇa khinna mānasaḥ
kṛtānutāpah sa kalinda nandinī taṭānta kuñje viṣasāda mādhavaḥ

The poet Jayadeva describes the Vasanta Rāsa (the vernal Rāsa-dance) as follows: "Kaṁsāri (Kṛṣṇa) left all the other beautiful girls of Vraja to take Rādhā, who is the essential chain who binds Him to His lusty desires, in His heart. When Śrī Rādhikā became jealous and left Kṛṣṇa behind, Kṛṣṇa looked for Her everywhere, His mind pierced by Cupid's darts. When He could not find Her, Mādhava entered a *kuñja* on the bank of the Yamunā and began to lament there." {Gīta Govindam 3.1-2} *śata koṭi gopīte nahe kāma nirvāpana* (C.C.): Even a billion *gopīs* cannot soothe Kṛṣṇa's pain of separation from Śrī Rādhā. Śrīmat Dāsa Gosvāmī described in his 'Muktā Caritra' how Kṛṣṇa anxiously lamented about Śrī Rādhā's absence to His own Queen Satyabhāmā in Dvārakā after describing His Vraja-*līlā* to her:

mad vaksaḥ sthala campakāvalir iyam man netra padma dvayī
saudhā siktir iyaṁ mad eka vilasat sarvāṅga lakṣmīr iyam
mat prāṇoru vihaṅga vallarir iyam mat kāmita śrīr iyaṁ
maj jīvātur iyaṁ mayā punar aho hā hā kadā lapsyate

"O! Alas! When will I again attain that Rādhā, who is like Campaka-flowers on My chest, who showers My lotus-like eyes with nectar, whose bodily beauty is the only place for My pastimes, who is like a vine for the bird of My heart to sit on, who is My desired opulence and My very life?" Even a stone will melt after hearing how pitifully Kṛṣṇa lamented to Himself about Śrī Rādhā after He drank the sweet nectar-words of Madhumaṅgala and thus remembered Her:

hā mat prāṇa kapota vāsa baḍabhī prema sphuran mādhurī
dhārāpāra sarid vare guṇakalā narma praheli khane
hā man netra cakora poṣaka vidhu jyotsnā taṭe rādhike
hā hā mad duritena kena nidhivat prāptā karāt tvaṁ cyutā

"Hā Rādhe! You are the abode for the pigeon of My life, a boundless river with a stream of sweetness that is enhanced by *prema*, and a mine of jokes, riddles, qualities and arts! You are the moonlight that feeds the Cakora-bird of My eyes! Alas! Alas! Which force of bad luck has taken Me away from You after first finding You?"

In the same way the *kiṅkarīs* have no other shelter but Śrīmatī's lotus feet, from whom the embodiment of full transcendental bliss, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, suffers so much separation, and there is no other means to soothe their hearts, that are burning in the fire of separation from Her, then to see these beautiful feet. The *kiṅkarīs* don't want Kṛṣṇa alone. Their love for Śrīmatī is so pure that even in their dreams they don't desire Kṛṣṇa's intimate company. One of the 108 names that our Dāsa Gosvāmī gives to Śrī Rādhikā is *svagaṇādvaita jīvātu svīyāhaṅkāra vardhinī* "She is the only life-support of Her maidservants, and this increases their pride." These maidservants have such a deep love for Śrī Rādhā; they do not even have that for Kṛṣṇa! No one but the *kiṅkarīs* are so worthy of being Rādhikā's *priya-pātra* (object of love). This is experienced best at the time of separation. By Svāminī's grace the *virahinī dāsī* has wonderful experiences during *smaraṇa*, dreams and *sphuraṇa* (transcendental revelations), and these experiences are her only life-support. A revelation gives temporary peace, and separation gives a burning suffering. The root cause of this suffering is want of the direct service of the Yugala Kiśora. The *mañjarīs*' love for Kiśora and Kiśorī is causeless. Where is the bliss of worshipping only Kṛṣṇa? The real ecstasy lies in the Yugala *bhajan*! *yugala caraṇa dekhi, saphala koribo*

āṅkhi, ei mora manera kāmanā (Prārthanā) "I will make my eyes successful by seeing the Yugala's lotus feet; this is the desire on my mind!" The Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava Ācāryas (*mahā-janas*) desire to see the Divine Couple to extinguish the burning fire of their love-in-separation, and they pray for the service of Their lotus feet:

nija pada sevā dibā, nāhi more upekhibā,
duhu pahu karuṇā sāgara
duhu vinā nāhi jāno, ei boḍo bhāgya māno,
mui boḍo patita pāmara

"Please give me the service of Your lotus feet! Don't let me down! You are both oceans of compassion! I don't know anyone else but You two, and I would feel greatly fortunate if I could surrender to the service of Your lotus feet! I am a very deeply fallen wretch!

mallikā mālatī yūthī, nānā phule mālā gāṅthi,
kobe dibo doṅhāra galāya
sonāra kaṭorā kori, karpūra candana bhari,
kobe dibo doṅhākāra gāya
āra kobe emon hobo, duhu mukha nirakhibo,
līlā rasa nikuñja śayane

"When can I string garlands of Mallikā-, Mālatī-, Yūthī- and different other flowers, and hang them around Their necks? When will I fill up a golden goblet with camphor and sandalwood-pulp and anoint Their bodies with these unguents? O, when can I see Their faces as They lie on a *rasika* playbed in the *nikuñja*?" {Prārthanā}

The *mañjarīs* never want just Kṛṣṇa. They don't even think of Kṛṣṇa's bodily association in their dreams! When Kṛṣṇa pulls at Śrī Rūpa Mañjarī's bodice, she hisses like a trampled-down snake, saying: "Shame on You! Don't You know who I am? I can give my life to You, but not my body! This body I have offered to Śrī Rādhā!" Then Āljī will beg forgiveness with folded hands. No one but the *kiṅkarīs* can be so loyal to Śrī Rādhā!

The prayer in this verse was offered while remembering the pastime described in (the commentary of) the previous verse. Śrī Raghunātha dāsa feels indescribably attracted to the red lac on Śrīmatī's lotus-like feet, and he says "O *devi*! This person has died from the bite of the black snake of not seeing You, and the lac that anoints Your lotus feet is the only elixir that can revive him! Show me these lac-anointed feet just once!" He says *mṛtaṁ janaṁ* : this person is dead. But how can a dead person speak? The direct connection with Śrī Rādhā is not there, and what else can that be for a surrendered maidservant than death? What a wonderful savour there is in this death, which is a *sañcārī bhāva*, a particular wave in the ocean of *prema*!

unmajjanti nimajjanti sthāyiny amṛta vāridhau
ūrmivad vardhayanty enaṁ yānti tad-rūpatāṁ ca te

"*sañcārī bhāvas* are like waves that rise and sink in the nectar-ocean of the *sthāyi bhāva* (permanent mood), increasing it and then merging into it again." (Bhakti Rasāmṛta Sindhu 2.4.3) These words are spoken in *svarūpāveśa*. Death is the final stage of transcendental loving ecstasy, so the death that is spoken of here is not a physical death, but a spiritual death. The soul is a maidservant of Śrī Rādhā. Raghunātha's *svarūpa* is being squashed and that feels more miserable than death. Śrīla Narottama Dāsa Ṭhākura sings (in Śrī Rūpa Mañjarī pada): *tuya adarśana ahi, garale jārala dehī, ciro dina tapita jīvana* "This *dehī* (embodied soul) has for long been suffering from the burning poison of not seeing you." The word *dehī* indicates that the soul suffers death, not the body. Even a person who died from a snake-bite can live! "The lac on the soles of Your lotus feet is reviving me!" Just as Raghunātha feels so miserable when he cannot see Śrī Rādhā's lotus feet that he feels as if he is dead, the *sādhaka* should

also feel that the beauty of *smaraṇa* is his only means of survival. He should also feel that forgetfulness (of these lotus feet) is like death; he should also feel some of this heartache. *tuyā vismaraṇa śela buke* "Forgetfulness of You hurts me like a spear in my heart!" The nature of bodily consciousness is that it awakens remembrance of temporary matters and causes one to forget the lotus feet of the Divine Couple. "O wicked mind! Why don't you stick to these lotus feet all of the time? Why does material existence always come in the heart? May my whole consciousness take You along, so that it will not go anywhere else!" The practitioners should anxiously pray like this to Śrīmatī's lotus feet! They can learn this from the *mahā vāṇī* (great words) of Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī. The devotee who is fixed in *smaraṇa* should forget his own sense of doership in the practice of *smaraṇa*; he should no longer be able to think "I am doing *smaraṇa*!" In his *siddha svarūpa* the devotee experiences that he is close to his favorite deity. How blissful it is to be close to Śrī Rādhā's lotus feet even in *smaraṇa*! Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī is an eternal associate of the Lord, so his experiences and his bliss are more vivid than anything. His mind only relishes the remembrance of Śrī Rādhā. How wonderful is the splendor of Her toenails! How can Madhusūdana (the relishing honeybee Kṛṣṇa) survive without relishing the honey from such lotus feet? Śrī Raghunātha is the maidservant of She whose footlac colors Śyāma's curly locks! Śyāma Himself cannot apply this footlac on Svāminī's lotus feet; all His limbs are overwhelmed by loving ecstasy and His eyes are filled with tears of love. Svāminī then says: "Sundara! Here, You don't know how to put My footlac on! Tulasī, come here! You do it!" But then, when Tulasī stretches out her hands, she does not see or feel anything anymore. When the transcendental vision disappears, she laments once more:[13]

tava adarśana, kāla bhujaṅgama, daṁśana mṛtera prāya
ki bolibo hāya!, viṣera jvālāya, jīvana jvaliyā yāya
devi! tomāra mahimā jāni!
soṁpi kāya mane, o raṅga caraṇe, śaraṇa loinu āmi
tava padatale, praphulla kamale, alakta bheṣaja bhāya
tā diyā tvarita, koro sañjīvita, ei bhikṣā dāsī cāya

"I am as if dead, being bitten by the black snake of not seeing You. Alas! What can I say? My life is burning in its poison! O Devi! I know Your glories! I have taken shelter of Your colorful lotus feet and I have offered my mind and body to You! Your footsoles resemble blooming lotus flowers and they are like a medicinal herb for me! Quickly give them to me and thus revive me! This is the alm that Your maidservant begs from You!" (Śrī Rasika-Candra dāsa)

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VERSE 10:

DEVI TE CARAṆA-PADMA DĀSIKĀṀ VIPRAYOGA-BHARA DĀVA PĀVAKAIḤ DAHYAMĀNATARA KĀYA-VALLARĪṀ JĪVAYA KṢAṆA NIRĪKṢAṆĀMṚTAIḤ

13 From "The *mañjarīs* never want just Kṛṣṇa..." upto here the purport is by Śrī Ānanda Gopāla Gosvāmī.

devi - goddess!; *te* - Your; *caraṇa* - feet; *padma* - lotus; *dāsikāṁ* - maidservant; *viprayoga* - separation; *bhara* - full; *dāva* - forest; *pāvakaiḥ* - by fires; *dahyamānatara* - being burned; *kāya* - body; *vallarīṁ* - vine-like; *jīvaya* - revive; *kṣaṇa* - for a moment; *nirīkṣaṇa* - glance; *amṛtaiḥ* - by the nectars.

O goddess, I am a maidservant of Your lotus-like feet, whose vine-like body burns in the forestfire of separation from You. Please revive me at once with Your nectarean glances!

Explanations: Śrī Raghunātha, in his *svarūpāveśa*, is weeping out of separation from Śrī Rādhā. These feelings of separation are as painful as the high rising flames of a forest fire. Strongly desiring to see his Prāṇeśvarī he falls on the bank of Rādhākuṇḍa and anxiously laments. He/she is unable to go on carrying the burden of his/her vine-like body, that is burning in the fire of separation from Iśvarī, and cries in an abode of misery, like a desolate orphan. Those who have surrendered to Śrī Rādhikā's lotus feet cannot find consolation in anything of this world anymore. Their minds and their lives are floating like wooden instruments on the stream of Śrī Rādhā's sweetness, that inundates the whole world. In his Vraja Vilāsa Stava, Śrīla Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī writes: *yan mādhurī divya sudhā rasābdheḥ smṛteḥ kaṇenāpy ati lolitātma*: "My heart becomes very agitated by remembering even a drop from the divine ocean of Their nectarean *rasa*." The great teachers of devotion say: "What is natural for the perfected souls is the target of the practising devotees". The example given by the great devotional teachers of yore is the compass for the practising *rasika* devotees of Vṛndāvana. When this example is to be invigorated one must awaken one's *svarūpāveśa*. It is the nature of bodily consciousness that the mind and the intelligence remain attached to dull, perishable matter, but the beauty of *svarūpāveśa* has no connection or relation with anything of this material world. Why would such a person like anything in the material world? Raghunātha was as wealthy as Lord Indra and his wife was as beautiful as an angel, but he gave it all up and fully surrendered at the lotus feet of Śrīman Mahāprabhu. I am acquainted with so many people of this world, but I'm not at all acquainted with my beloved deity! In his Manaḥ Śikṣā Śrī Raghunātha says: "Although I managed to give up lust and anger and so, the shameless dog-eating woman of the desire for distinction is still dancing in my heart! How can beautiful love ever touch my heart then?" *pratiṣṭhāśā dhṛṣṭā śvapaca ramaṇī me hṛdi naṭet kathaṁ sādhu premā spṛśati śucir etan nanu manaḥ,* This desire for distinction does not allow the natural love for the lotus feet of the beloved deity to come in the heart. The root cause of this pollution is identification with the material body. In his *svarūpāveśa* the practising devotee must certainly experience that "I don't have anyone else but You in this world!" Unless one thinks like that one cannot proceed towards the lotus feet of the beloved deity. Out of eagerness for his beloved deity the practising devotee can not sit quietly. He feels like a deer pierced by an arrow, so he eagerly comes to Vṛndāvana, hoping to catch a glimpse of his beloved. Śrīla Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura has sung:

sukhamaya vṛndāvana, kobe hobe daraśana,
se dhūli mākhibo kobe gāya
preme gadagada hoiyā, rādhā-kṛṣṇa nāma loiyā,
kāṅdibo beḍābo ubharāya

"When will I see blissful Vṛndāvana and smear its dust on my body? When can I lovingly roll around there, chanting the names of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa and weeping profusely?"

nibhṛta nikuñja yāiyā, aṣṭānga praṇāma hoiyā,

ḍākibo hā rādhānātha boli
kobe yamunāra tīre, paraśa korobo nīre,
kobe pibo karapuṭe tuli

"I will go to the solitary arbours and fall flat on the ground, crying out: "O Lord of Rādhā!" When will I go to the bank of the Yamunā, touch her waters and drink it with the cups of my handpalms?"

āra kobe emon hobo, śrī rāsa maṇḍala yābo,
kobe gaḍāgaḍi dibo tāya
vaṁśīvaṭa chāyā pāiyā, parama ānanda hoiyā,
poḍiyā rahibo tāra chāya

"O, when can I go to the circle of the Rāsa-dance and roll around there? When will I become most happy by getting shaded by the Vaṁśīvaṭa-tree and when can I stay in that shade?"

kobe govardhana giri, dekhibo nayana bhari,
kobe hobe rādhākuṇḍe vāsa?
bhramite bhramite kobe, e deha patana hobe,
kohe dīna narottama dāsa.

"When can I fill my eyes with the view of Govardhana Hill and when can I live at Rādhākuṇḍa?" The lowly Narottama dāsa sings: "When will my body fall while I wander around there?"

Śrīpāda Prabodhānanda Sarasvatī has said: *kadā syāṁ śrī rādhe cakita iha vṛndāvana bhuvi* "Hā Rādhe! When can I live in Vṛndāvana in great astonishment, remembering the wave of Your nectarean pastimes? When will I look all around for You, thinking: Now You have come, I understand I'm getting it!?" This eagerness for experience will swiftly bring the *līlās* before the eyes. "Although I am living in Vṛndāvana I don't experience anything. I have so many things to say about it, but actually my heart is empty. I want to get some result from my life of devotional practice. Even if I can just spend my time with the hope that "You are my mistress!", then I will attain You!"

Śrī Raghunātha dāsa says: *devi te caraṇa padma dāsikāṁ* "O goddess Śrī Rādhe! I am a maidservant of Your lotus feet! The vine-like body of this fallen maidservant is totally burning in the forest-fire of separation from You! My mind is surrendered to You - *dahyamānatara kāya-vallarīṁ*. Then it is as if Svāminī asks him: "O, isn't your heart eager for Me? Then how can you attain Me?" She is the limitless ocean of compassion and She knows very well how to take Her maidservants to Her lotus feet by making them eager for Her! How much She relishes the eager lamentations of Her loving devotees! The maidservant is very eager, and Svāminī takes Śyāmasundara along to listen to her lamentations. The Lord enjoys the flavours of devotion. Śrī Kṛṣṇa told Bilvamaṅgala Ṭhākura: "I am with you and I am very happy to hear your lamentations of separation from Me. Since your words delighted My ears so much I will call your book 'Kṛṣṇa Karṇāmṛta', nectar for Kṛṣṇa's ears!" Śrī Raghunātha's anxiety is heartrending. His vine-like body burns in a great forest-fire of love in- separation, and he cannot survive anymore without submitting this. "I am a maidservant of Your lotus feet, that soothe even Śyāmasundara's afflicted heart when He takes them to His chest. The vine-like body of this fallen maidservant is burning in the forest-fire of separation from You. Please once revive me with Your nectarean glance!"[14] Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī is a *nitya siddha-* (eternally perfect) devotee, but the eagerness of the *sādhana siddhas,* the devotees who have

[14] From: "The example given by..." upto here the purport is by Śrī Ānanda Gopāla Gosvāmī.

attained the perfection of *prema* in this lifetime, is also wonderful! Śrīla Siddha Kṛṣṇa dāsa Bābājī, who lived in Govardhana, prayed as follows:

hā hā prāṇeśvari! tuyā viccheda anale; niravadhi prāṇa mora dhiki dhiki jvale
e duḥkha sāgara hoite uddhāra koriyā; śrī caraṇe rākho more kiṅkarī koriyā
heno dina ki hobe tava śrī mukhera vāṇī; karṇete śunibo āra nūpurera dhvani
tomāra lāvaṇyāmṛta nayana caṣake; kobe vā koribo pāna parānanda sukhe
āghrāna koribo tava aṅga parimala; pulake pūrṇita hobe mora kalevara
kobe tavocchiṣṭāmṛta dibe kṛpā kori; pāiyā kṛtārthā hobe e nava kiṅkarī
tumi mora japa tapa tumi mora dhyāna; janmāvadhi tomā vinā nāhi jāni āna
kāntāli sahita tumi yathāya vihara; kṛpā kori sei sthāne more dāsī koro
kānde dīna kṛṣṇa dāsa dante tṛṇa dhari; abhilāṣa pūrṇa mora koro hemagauri

"O Queen of my life! My heart is constantly burning in the fire of separation from You! Please save me from this ocean of sorrow by keeping me at Your lotus feet and making me Your maidservant! When will I hear the delectable words from Your beautiful mouth and the jingling of Your anklebells? When will I drink the nectar of Your indescribable beauty through the cups of my eyes in topmost ecstasy, and when will I smell Your bodily fragrance, making all the hairs of my body stand on end? Please bless this new maidservant by giving her the nectarean food-remnants that emanate from Your lotus-mouth! You are my *japa*, You are my penance and You are my meditation, and since I was born I haven't known anyone but You! Wherever You sport with Your lover and Your girlfriends, please take me there also as Your maidservant. Thus the fallen Kṛṣṇa dāsa weeps, holding a straw between his teeth and praying: O golden beauty! Please fulfill my desires!"

How am I spending the day, having such great teachers! Some of this eagerness and enthusiasm will appear in the lives of those who naturally perform their *bhajana*. How much Śrī Raghunātha dāsa is lamenting! It is as if his heart is breaking! Suddenly, like a lightning-strike, a new spiritual vision comes to him. He sees that Śyāma is decorating Svāminī, while Śrī Rūpa Mañjarī holds the dressing-paraphernalia in her hand. Śyāma paints pictures of Makarī-fishes on Rādhikā's cheeks, but it doesn't work so well because His hands are shivering of loving ecstasy. Seeing how Śyāma is absorbed in decorating Her, Svāminī softly smiles. That smile is like nectar - what if it will fall off? Kṛṣṇa won't allow it to fall, so He catches it with the cups of His lips (by kissing Her). Svāminī casts a restless glance on Śyāma's face, and enchants Him completely with this. Śrī Raghunātha dāsa is absorbed in relishing this nectarean pastime in his *siddha svarūpa*. Seeing Śyāma's incompetence, Svāminī looks towards Tulasī, hinting at her that she should take Śyāma's job over. Tulasī's heart is filled with bliss when she gets this order, but when she gets up the vision disappears and Śrī Raghunātha dāsa, returning to his external absorption, falls on the bank of Rādhākuṇḍa, crying and lamenting. Burning with endless feelings of separation, he considers Rādhākuṇḍa to be just like the gaping mouth of a tiger:

śūnyāyate mahā-goṣṭhaṁ girīndro'jāgarāyate
vyāghra tuṇḍāyate kuṇḍaṁ jīvātu rahitasya me

"Out of separation from my heart's beloved, it seems to me that the great fields of Vraja are completely empty, Govardhana Hill has become like a python and Rādhākuṇḍa has become like the gaping mouth of a tiger!" (Prārthanāśraya Caturdaśakaṁ - 11) These divine playgrounds are so much reminding a loving devotee of his beloved deities while he is deprived of Their personal service and association that the mere sight of them gives him great pain of separation. Śrī Raghunātha weeps and prays: *jīvaya kṣaṇa nirīkṣanāmṛtaiḥ*, remembering the ever-so-sweet merciful glances that Svāminī casts on her/him when She orders her/him to

perform such sweet services. These glances are *amṛta* (*a* = not, and *mṛta* = death, Ed.) and they are the only medicine that can revive him, so he anxiously prays: "Please cast just one merciful glance on this fallen maidservant!"[15]
Śrī Rasika-Candra Dāsa sings:

śuno devi nivedana, āmi tava dāsī jana,
cira pāda padma sevā ratā
tomāra virahānale, sadā mora tanu jvale,
dāvānale yeno vana-latā

"Listen O goddess, to my request: I am Your maidservant, dedicated to Your lotus feet for long! My body burns in the fire of separation from You, like a vine in a forestfire."

tava kṣaṇa nirīkṣaṇa, amṛtera prasravana,
kaṇa mātra cāhi āmi tāra
kṛpā kori koro dāna, vāñchāo dāsīra prāṇa,
tomā boi gati nāhi āra

"Your momentary glance is like a stream of nectar, and I only want one drop of that. Please give it to me and thus save Your *dāsī*'s life! I have no other shelter but You!"

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VERSE 11:

SVAPNE'PI KIṀ SUMUKHI TE CARAṆĀMBUJĀTA
RĀJAT PARĀGA PAṬAVĀSA VIBHŪṢAṆENA
ŚOBHĀṀ PARAM ATITARAM AHAHOTTAṀĀṄGAṀ
VIBHRAD BHAVIṢYATI KADĀ MAMA SĀRTHA-NĀMA

svapne - in a dream; *api* - even; *kiṁ* - what; *sumukhi* - O fair-faced One!; *te* - Your; *caraṇa* - feet; *ambujāta* - lotus; *rājat* - glistening; *parāga* - pollen; *paṭavāsa* - fragrant pollen; *vibhūsaṇena* - by decoration; *śobhāṁ* - beauty; *parām* - most; *atitarām* - great; *ahaha* - Oh!; *uttamāṅgaṁ* - the highest or best limb; *vibhrad* - holding; *bhaviṣyati* - will become; *kadā* - when; *mama* - mine; *sārtha nāma* - properly named.

O Sumukhi (fair-faced girl)! When will I, even in a dream, be justified in calling my head the highest limb (uttamāṅga) of my body by beautifying it with the glistening fragrant pollen of Your lotus feet?

Explanations: The more intense Śrī Raghunātha's spiritual vision of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa's pastimes was, the more intense the suffering of separation becomes when the vision disappears, and the greater his eagerness in *sadhakāveśa* becomes to experience Svāminī's rarely attained form, qualities and pastimes again. Śrīpāda Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa writes in

[15] The purport on this page is by Śrī Ānanda Gopāla Gosvāmī.

his commentary on the first verse of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī's 'Utkalikā Vallari' *alabdhābhīṣṭasyābhīṣṭotkaṇṭhayā vigalita cittasya tallābhe svāyogyatva sphūrtyābhyudita dainyasya bhaktasya sakrando'śru nirjharaḥ patatīti* "When the devotee cannot experience his beloved deity anymore because his spiritual vision vanishes his heart melts with eagerness and a great feeling of humility surges up in his heart. Then he cries incessantly, realizing how unqualified he is." Śrī Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī is exactly in that situation. In his *svarūpāveśa* he says: "You are rarely seen directly. Will I at least in a dream be justified to call my head the highest limb of my body by wearing the fragrant pollen of Your lotus feet on it? Only when it wears this fragrant pollen my head is justly called my highest limb!" How intensely he desires this! Although he understands that he desires something which is hard to attain, he cannot give up hoping. *āpanā ayogya dekhi mone pāo kṣobha; tathāpi tomāra guṇe upajāya lobha* (C.C). "Although I see that I'm unworthy, my mind is still greedy for Your attributes". Although he sees that he's completely unqualified, his mind is still illuminated by the hope for getting Their sweet mercy. Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī wrote:

sākṣātkṛtiṁ bata yayor na mahattamo'pi
kartuṁ manasy api manāk prabhutām upaiti
icchannayaṁ nayanayoḥ pathi tau bhavantau
jantur vijitya nijagāra bhiyaṁ hriyaṁ ca
athavā mama kiṁ nu dūṣanaṁ bata vṛndāvana cakravartinau
yuvayor guṇa mādhurī navā janam unmādayatīha kaṁ na vā

"O King and Queen of Vṛndāvana! Although the greatest souls were not able to get Your direct audience for even a moment, this fallen soul desires it, swallowing his fear and his shame! But what is my fault in this? Who will not be intoxicated by the ever-fresh sweetness of Your qualities?" (Utkalikā Vallari 34-35) Śrī Raghunātha's heart is greatly agitated when he relishes Śrīmatī's sweetness and beauty and the sweetness of Her attributes and pastimes. Just as Agastya Muni once drank the water of all the seven oceans, Raghunātha's eagerness now also drinks the ocean of his patience and dries it up completely. The expertise of the *ācāryas*' *bhajana* can be seen in the sweetness of their activities. When a person on the devotional path is attacked by *māyā* he will commit offenses and he won't be able to relish the joy of devotion. How sweet are the teachings of the *ācāryas*! When *prasāda* is taken they say: "Beware, O saints! Don't become immersed in enjoying the tongue now! Remember that you are here only to taste the remnants of the Lord's foodstuffs!" In this way all physical activities, like sleeping and eating should be performed as items of *bhajan*. When these things are seen as worldly activities the devotee is deceived.

In this verse Śrī Raghunātha prays to the lotus-feet of Śrīmatī in his *svarūpāveśa*. How sweetly he addresses Her with *ayi sumukhi*! How many sweet *līlās* he remembers when he sees Her beautiful face! Kṛṣṇa is the amorous *dhīra lalita*-hero who is carefree and controlled by His sweethearts. He is not encumbered with maintaining the world. *rātri dina kuñja krīḍā kore rādhā saṅge; kaiśora vayasa saphala koilo krīḍā raṅge* (C.C.) "Day and night He plays with Rādhā in the groves of Vṛndāvana. In this way He makes His adolescence successful with His lovesports." Just like Kṛṣṇa, Rādhā is also always absorbed in pastimes, and when Kṛṣṇa sees Her beautiful face (Sumukhī), which is filled with the *rasa* of *mahā bhāva*, He also becomes absorbed in erotic pastimes, forgetting everything else."[16]

śrī mukha sundara vara, hema nīla kānti dhara,
bhāva bhūṣaṇa koru śobhā.
nīla pīta vāsa dhara, gaurī śyāma manohara,

[16] Purport up to here is by Śrī Ānanda Gopāla Gosvāmī.

antarera bhāve duhu lobhā

"Their exquisitely beautiful faces, that carry a golden and blue lustre, are beautified by ornaments of ecstatic love. Their complexions are golden and blue and Their garments are blue and golden, showing that They carry love for Each other in Their hearts and that they are yearning for Each other." (Prema Bhakti Candrikā)

With His mother He is a child, with Pūtanā He is omniscient and with Rādhārāṇī He is just ignorant (*mugdha*, or enchanted)! When He lies in Her arms in the *kuñja* at daybreak His Godhood is swallowed by Rādhārāṇī's *mahā bhāva*. The parrots sing in the trees and He doesn't even remember that His mother may be wondering where He is. He does not sleep - this is called *rasālasa* (divine romantic fatigue). His Absolute knowledge is then pervaded by Rādhikā's Absolute Love.[17] Although He is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Eternal and Imperishable, Self-satisfied and so on, He will fearfully return to His own home when the old she-monkey Kakkhatī repeatedly announces Jaṭilā's coming to the *kuñja* at daybreak:

pada ādha calata khalata puna beri; puna pheri cumbaye duhun mukha heri
duhun jana nayane galaye jaladhāra; roi roi sakhīgana coloi nā pāra
kṣeṇe bhaye sacakita nayane nehāra; galita vasana phula kuntala bhāra
nūpura ābharaṇa āñcare nelo; duhuṅ ati kātare duhuṅ pathe gelo
puna puna heraite herai nā pāi; nayanaka lorahi vasana bhigāya

"Kṛṣṇa takes half a step towards home - then He turns back to kiss Rādhā once again. Streams of tears glide from Their eyes as They look at Each other's faces. The *sakhīs* are crying. They can also not move. Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa fearfully look at Each other with anxious eyes while Their clothes and Their flower garlands fall off. After taking off Their anklebells and other ornaments They both anxiously go Their own ways, constantly looking back at Each other until They cannot see Each other anymore, drenching Their clothes with Their tears."

Which other lady-love can create such a thirst in Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the transcendental Cupid of Vṛndāvana? This cannot be understood without having devotional experience, being in a mundane consciousness. Śrī Śukadeva says: "Beware, O devotees! He who maddens the whole world is not the ordinary Cupid, He's the spiritual enchanter of Cupid, the *kāma ghana vigraha*, the embodiment of intense desire!" In the Toṣaṇī-commentary on Śrīmad Bhāgavata's verse 10.32.2 it is written: *nānā vāsudevādi caturvyūheṣu ye sākṣān manmathaḥ svayaṁ kāmadevaḥ. na tu tadīya śakty aṁśāveśī prākṛta manmathavad asākṣād rūpāḥ teṣām api manmathaḥ manmathatva prakāśakaḥ cakṣuś cakṣur ity ādivat.* "Pradyumna, who belongs to the Caturvyūha (quadruple phalanx of Lord Viṣṇu) in Dvārakā, is directly Cupid, the god of love, and Śrī Kṛṣṇa is again His origin. Just as the power of seeing is the origin of the eyes, or the 'eye of eyes', so Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the inciting power of Cupid, the One who agitates even the mundane agitator Cupid with just the slightest drop from the ocean of His all-enchanting power!" But the *kiṅkarīs* are serving She who enchants even Him! *jagata mohana kṛṣṇa tāhāra mohinī* (C.C.) "Kṛṣṇa is the enchanter of the world, but Rādhā enchants even Him!" Being thus enchanted Kṛṣṇa finally assumed Her mood and complexion. Śrī Locana dāsa Ṭhākura sings: *rādhāra dheyāne hiyā, ki sāje sājilo go, ei gorā tanu tāra sākhi* "He meditated on Rādhā within His heart, that can be proven by His appearance with this golden body." Which surrendered *kiṅkarī* will not be eager to attain such a sublime service? Why does Kṛṣṇa stand in His threefold bending form? Just to be able to touch Rādhikā's skirt with His heel! Only the *rasika* devotees know this.[18]

Śrī Raghunātha dāsa weeps: "I don't even aspire for Your direct audience! Will You not even reveal Yourself in my dreams? The fragrant pollen of Your lotuslike feet should decorate

[17] This purport is by Śrīla Ānanda Gopāla Gosvāmī.

[18] Quoted from Viśvanātha Cakravartī's Kṛṣṇa Bhāvanāmṛta.

my head, only then my head has become successful! The whole creation has become useful through Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa's descension, because Their spiritually effulgent sweetness looks even more bright in the drab material creation, just as a candle shines brighter in the darkness. The material world was created to make Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa's *līlā* look more sweet and colorful, not just for making the independent living beings suffer and enjoy the results of their activities! That is of secondary importance.[19]

This verse is connected with the revelation of a sweet pastime. In his spiritual identity of Tulasī Mañjarī Srī Raghunātha dāsa has brought Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa together in a lonely *kuñja* on the bank of Rādhākuṇḍa. How expert They are in Their sweet play! The empress of Vṛndāvana fulfills desires that Kṛṣṇa could not even dream of! Tulasī witnesses Their sweet pastimes through a hole in the wall of the *nikuñja*. After the love-play the enchanted Hero sits at Svāminī's feet, staring at Her sweet face with unblinking eyes. Understanding that her time to serve has come, Tulasī enters into the *kuñja*. Kṛṣṇa holds Śrīmatī's lotus feet to His chest and is stricken by symptoms of ecstatic love. *kṛṣṇa sukha vilāsera nidhi*: She is the jewel of Kṛṣṇa's blissful pastimes. What a wonderful loving expertise! Kṛṣṇa's limbs are studded with goosepimples, and tears of love flow from His eyes. His chest is moistened with sweatdrops, so the fragrant powder on His chest starts sticking on Svāminī's footsoles. Seeing this, Tulasī giggles, covering her mouth with her hand. Seeing her laughing, Svāminī kicks fortunate Tulasi with Her foot, so that the fragrant powder from Kṛṣṇa's chest adorns her head, making it worthy to be called her best and highest limb (*uttamāṅga*).[20]

Śrī Rasika-Candra Dāsa sings:

he sumukhi rādhe ki kohobo hāy!
tava srī caraṇa tala, yeno phulla śatadala,
svapane-o na herinu tāya

"O fair-faced Rādhe! Alas! What can I say? Your footsoles are like blooming lotus flowers, but I have not seen them even in dreams!"

tāhe ye parāga reṇu, paṭavāsa sama janu,
bhūṣaṇa svarūpa anupama
kobe tāhā śire dhari, bāḍāiya sumādhurī,
uttamāṅga hobe sārtha-nāma

"The dust on those footsoles is like fragrant pollen, and is a matchless decoration! When will I hold this pollen on my head, thereby increasing its sweetness and making its name *uttamāṅga* (best limb) successful?"

e boḍo bharasā mone, tava kṛpā mahā dhane,
svapane-o na hobo vañchita
sakhīgaṇa mājhe tava, cihnata hoiyā rava,
sadā ei monera vāñchita

"Within my mind I carry the great desire not to be deprived of the great wealth of Your mercy even in a dream! My mind always desires that I will be marked amongst Your girlfriends."

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[19] This is quoted from Śrī Viśvanātha Cakravartī's commentary on Śrīmad Bhāgavata 10.14.37

[20] This pastime is described by Śrīla Ānanda Gopāla Gosvāmī.

VERSE 12:

AMṚTĀBDHI RASA PRĀYAIS TAVA NŪPURA ŚIÑJITAIḤ
HĀ KADĀ MAMA KALYĀṆI BĀDHIRYAM APANEṢYATE

amṛta - nectar; *abdhi* - ocean; *rasa* - spiritual flavour; *prāyaiḥ* - great; *tava* - Your; *nūpura* - anklebells; *śiñjitaiḥ* - by the jingling; *hā* - O!; *kadā* - when; *mama* - my; *kalyāṇi* - beautiful, or auspicious girl; *bādhiryam* - deafness, *apaneṣyate* - will remove.

O Kalyāṇi (auspicious or beautiful girl)! When will the jingling of Your anklebells, that is like an ocean of nectarean rasa, cure my deafness?

Explanations: In the previous verse it was experienced how the beloved deity is rarely attained and how the desire to attain Her even in a dream had arisen. In this verse Śrī Raghunātha prays: "O Kalyāṇi! When will the jingling of Your ankle bells, that is like an ocean of nectar, remove my deafness?" Here the sound of Śrī Rādhā's anklebells are compared to an ocean of *rasa* and nectar. This *rasa* is tasted within the spiritual self. *anurāgī* Śrīpāda Bilvamaṅgala Ṭhākura (Līlāśuka) was fascinated by the jingling of Śrī Govinda's anklebells in his Kṛṣṇa Karnāmṛta (17) and said:

mama cetasi sphuratu ballabī vibhor maṇi nūpura praṇayi mañju śiñjitam
kamala vane cara kalinda kanyakā kalahaṁsa kaṇṭha kala kūjitādṛtam

"May the sweet jingling of the jewelled anklebells of the Gopī-lover (Kṛṣṇa, the lover of Rādhā), that sounds like the cooing of the swans in a lotus-forest of the Yamunā-river, be manifest in my mind." Śrīla Kṛṣṇa Dāsa Kavirāja writes in his commentary on this verse that the jingling of Kṛṣṇa's anklebells is so relishable because He is following Śrīmatī Rādhikā at that time. Then how can we describe the sweetness of the jingling of Śrī Rādhikā's anklebells (when She is followed by Govinda)? What then to speak of the sweetness of the jingling of Śrī Rādhikā's anklebells! Śrīla Prabodhānanda Sarasvatī writes:

pādāṅgulī nihita dṛṣṭim apatrapiṣṇum dūrād udīkṣya rasikendra mukhendu bimbam
vīkṣe calat pada-gatiṁ caritābhirāmāṁ jhaṅkāra nūpuravatīṁ bata karhi rādhām

(Rādhā Rasa Sudhānidhi - 16)

"When can I see Śrī Rādhā with Her charming form, shyly looking down at Her own toes when She sees the moonlike face of Kṛṣṇa, the king of relishers, from afar, as She steps along with jingling anklebells?" The endless streams of *mahā bhāva* that gush from Rādhikā's limbs when She experiences the ecstasy of seeing Kṛṣṇa sprinkle Her anklebells and make their jingling sound like an ocean of nectar.

Śrī Raghunātha dāsa says: "Please let me relish just one drop of the sweet nectar of this jingling!" His heart is filled with this strong desire, and this desire always increases, causing him to lament like this. Words cannot really describe these lamentations. Through these prayers the absorption of Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī can be experienced. Not everyone

can be addressed so lovingly with 'Kalyāṇi': All-auspicious Svāminī! The sweetness of this address does not indicate the heart's perception of anything from this material world. These transcendental pastimes bloom up within the heart in such a way that nothing from the visible world can be perceived within the heart anymore. Material consciousness muddens the heart of the practising devotee. This experience cannot be had through mere dry knowledge but only through pure love, characterised by an intense feeling of possessiveness.[21] In this connection Śrī Kṛṣṇa says:

yā niśā sarva bhūtānāṁ tasyāṁ jagarti saṁyamī
yasyāṁ jāgrati bhūtāni sā niśā paśyato muneḥ

"That which is night to all beings, in that state (of transcendental bliss) the selfcontrolled saint keeps awake. And that (temporary material happiness) in which all beings keep awake is night to the seer." (Bhagavad Gītā 2,69) Who else but a person who has awakened his internal identity can address Rādhārāṇī like this, calling Her Kalyāṇī? The great sage Śukadeva was astonished by the feelings of mineness felt towards Kṛṣṇa by His loving devotees in Vraja and he told Mahārāja Parīkṣit:

na cāntar na bahir yasya na pūrvaṁ nāpi cāparaṁ
pūrvāparaṁ bahiś cāntar jagato yo jagac ca yaḥ
taṁ matvātmajam avyaktaṁ martya-liṅgam adhokṣajam
gopīkolukhale dāmnā babandha prākṛtaṁ yathā

"The Lord, who is called Adhokṣaja, He Who is not perceivable through the material senses, has no inside, no outside, no before and no after. He is pervading the world from west to east, inside and outside, and His form is the world itself, but now He allowed Himself to be bound to a grinding-mortar by His *gopī*-mother, just like an ordinary mortal human child." (Śrīmad Bhāgavata 10.9.13-14) Here the all-pervading Lord loses His omnipotence (at the hands of His loving devotee). What is impossible in the world of *tattva* (spiritual truth) becomes possible in the world of *līlā*: Although Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Lord, who cannot be perceived even by great mystics, He still allows His cowherdboyfriend Śrīdāma to mount His shoulders after He lost a game! *uvāha bhagavān kṛṣṇaḥ śrīdāmānāṁ parājitaḥ* (Śrīmad Bhāgavata 10.18.24) The Supreme Lord, whose lotus feet cannot even be perceived by the greatest mystics, now holds His lotus feet on the chests of His cowherdboy friends! There is no comparison to the amorous relationship a devotee can have with the Lord. His beloved is sitting in a *kuñja*, being angry with Him, and the Lord stands at the *kuñja*-gate with tearfilled eyes, like a beggar, like an offender! Mānamayī (proud Rādhikā) then angrily rebukes Him, saying:

yāhi mādhava yāhi keśava mā vada kaitava vādaṁ;
tām anusara sarasīruha locana yā tava harati viñādam (Gīta Govindam)

"Go, Mādhava! Go, Keśava! Don't speak Your false words to Me! Just follow that girl who removes Your sorrow, O lotus-eyed One!" *prema* really becomes manifest when there develops a feeling of 'He, or She, is mine!' Lord Brahmā prayed to Kṛṣṇa:

jānanta eva jānantu kiṁ bahūktya na me prabho
manaso vapuṣo vāco vaibhavaṁ tava gocaraḥ

[21] Last paragraph by Śrīla Ānanda Gopāla Gosvāmī

Lord Brahmā said: "Everyone may say that He knows You in full. Let them know it! What more can I say, O Lord? I cannot perceive Your greatness with my mind, body, or words!" (Śrīmad Bhāgavata 10.14.38) But in Vraja a tailor will come up to Kṛṣṇa with a yardstick to see what His size is! That is the wonderful power of the Love of Vraja! The address 'Kalyāṇi' is illuminated by the sweet lustre of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa's mutual relish of Each other. The *ācāryas* have taught: "We must see Śyāmasundara from Rādhārāṇī's perspective and Rādhārāṇī from Śyāmasundara's perspective. She bestows welfare to Śyāmasundara. Śrī Kṛṣṇa bestows welfare on the world and Svāminī embodies His welfare.[22] In *pūrva rāga* the embodiment of bliss is hankering for Śrī Rādhā. The Mahājanas have written:

campaka dāma heri, cita ati kampita,
locana bohe anurāga
tuya rūpa antare, jāgaye nirantara,
dhani dhani tohāri sohāga

"Rādhe! When Subala gives Kṛṣṇa a golden garland of Campaka-flowers, His mind trembles and tears of passionate love flow from His eyes. O beautiful girl! Your form always awakens great love in His heart!"

vṛṣabhānu nandini, japaye rāti dini
bharama na bolaye ān.
lākho lākho dhani, bolaye madhura vāṇī,
svapane na pātaye kān.

"Day and night He murmurs: Vṛñabhānu Nandini!, without saying anything else out of confusion. Although hundreds of thousands of girls speak sweet words to Him, He does not listen to them even in dreams!"

'rā' kohi 'dhā' pahum, kohoi na pāroi,
dhārā dhari bohe lora
soi purukh maṇi, loṭāya dharaṇī puna,
ko koho ārati ora

"He can only pronounce the first syllable of Your name, Rā, but out of ecstasy He can not pronounce the other one, 'Dhā'. His eyes carry streams of tears. That jewel of men rolls on the ground; who can describe His distress?"

govinda dāsa tuyā, caraṇe nivedalo,
kānuka etohuṁ saṁvāda
nīcaya jānaho, tachu dukha khaṇḍaka,
kevala tuyā parasāda.

"Govinda Dāsa submits this news about Kānu (Kṛṣṇa) to Your lotus feet: Know that He feels miserable and that only Your grace (Kalyāṇa) can destroy His suffering!"

Śrī Kṛṣṇa bestows auspiciousness on the world, but Śrīmatī Rādhikā bestows auspiciousness even on Him! Śrī Govinda considers Himself blessed when He attains Rādhikā's company. He feels that His world is empty without Her, and She feels the same towards Him. Vṛṣabhānu's daughter thinks: "I fell in love with He who can never be possibly attained! And out of love I cannot even die of shame! There's no end to the chastisements of My superiors! I'm completely controlled by others! What a contrary condition! Why don't I

[22] This commentary is from Śrī Ānanda Gopāla Gosvāmī.

die? The parrots can see Kṛṣṇa, but there's no way for Me to see Him!" Śyāmasundara also cries for Rādhikā all night, missing Her, although He is *ānanda ghana vigraha*, the very form of intense transcendental bliss. And when He opens His eyes He thinks He sees His mother giving Him a cloth that is yellow like *haldi.* In this way He remembers Her again. Who in this world knows how to love like Her? Still, Śyāma did not manage to experience Her love fully, so He accepted Her mood and complexion and showed an *anurāga* similar to Rādhikā's (as Śrī Gaurāṅga). During the final twelve years of His manifest appearance Śrī Gaurāṅga was burning in the fire of that love-in- separation. What a condition for the embodiment of transcendental bliss! Each pore of His hair was on fire! That is the agony of Kṛṣṇa's Kalyāna-kāriṇī (Śrī Rādhikā, who acts for Kṛṣṇa's welfare)! With His own hand Kṛṣṇa completed a verse of Gīta Govinda with the words *dehi pādapallavam udāram* "Rādhe! Give Me Your generous lotus feet!" It is as if Kṛṣṇa said to the poet Jayadeva: "O Jayadeva! Why are you hesitating to write this down? My whole life is fulfilled when I attain these lotus feet![23] Who else knows how to love but She? The whole world tells Me: "Give, give!", only She says: "Take! Take!"

kṛṣṇa vāñchā pūrti rūpa kore ārādhane;
ataeva rādhikā nāma purāṇe vākhāne

"She worships Kṛṣṇa in a form that fulfills His desires, and thus the Purāṇas call Her Rādhikā." (Caitanya Caritāmṛta) She is the Queen of the *kuñja*-cottage, who makes eager Śyāma enjoy so much, as if He is a beggar getting a meal in the royal palace. Śrī Raghunātha dāsa says: "You are making everything auspicious for Kṛṣṇa - we're very happy to see that! When will Your anklebells, that jingle while You fulfill all of Śyama's desires, remove my deafness, so that I will not desire to hear anything else anymore?" The jingling of these anklebells takes place when the Śyāma-*rasa* is relished, but these anklebells don't just jingle straightaway; they jingle within this relish. This sound will awaken such devotional yearning that the ears do not want to hear anything else anymore. That is the poetic, secondary meaning of the word *bādhirya,* or deafness.

Then Śrī Raghunātha dāsa sees a sweet pastime through his spiritual eyes: Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa dance the Rāsa. Kṛṣṇa stands still and Rādhikā's anklebells give the rhythm to the sweet tune of His flute, which is the emperor of sounds, and increase that sweetness. Meanwhile Śyāma relishes the sweet jingling of Rādhikā's anklebells as well as the sweetness of His own fluteplaying, which is like an ocean of sweetness. That sound, that tune is the great opulence of the kingdom of God. *śabda brahma-mayaṁ veṇuṁ vādayantaṁ mukhāmbuje* (Brahma Saṁhitā) "His lotuslike mouth makes the flute play the sounds of *brahman*." This sweetness makes everything sweet, and reverses the natural behaviour of all living beings. *aspandanam gatimatam pulakas tarūnām* (Ś. Bhāg. 10.21.19) "It stuns the moving creatures and it causes the trees to get goosepimples of ecstasy." In this way the jingling of Rādhikā's anklebells causes the ocean of sweetness of Kṛṣṇa's flute-song to increase. Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī wrote (Utkalikā Vallari 27):

dhvasta brahma marāla kūjita bharair ūrjeśvari nūpura
kvāṇair ūrjita vaibhavas tava vibho vaṁśī prasūta kalaḥ
labdhaḥ śasta samasta nāda nagarī samrājyā lakṣmīṁ parām
ārādhya pramadāt kadā śravaṇayor dvandvena mandena me

"O all-pervading Lord! When will my ears attain the regal opulence of the best of sound vibrations when I hear Your flutesong which is mixed with the jingling of Ūrjeśvarī's (Rādhikā's) anklebells, that defeats the sweetness of the warbling of Lord Brahmā's swan, and that delights my dull ears?"

[23] This pastime is described by Śrīla Ānanda Gopāla Gosvāmī

Śyāma is the relisher of the jingling of Śrīmatī's anklebells, and the relish of the sweetness of this nectar-ocean arises in Tulasī's heart through Śyāma's relish. Then suddenly one anklebell falls off Svāminī's lotus feet and stops jingling. It is as if something is missing then. Tulasī stretches out her hand to put the anklebells back on, and then suddenly the spiritual vision disappears, leaving Śrī Raghunātha dāsa to lament: 'When will the jingling sound of Your anklebells remove my deafness?'[24]
Śrī Rasika-Candra dāsa sings:

hā hā śrīmatī rādhike! maṅgala svarūpe!; āmāra śravaṇa dvandva badhira anupe
tomāra nūpura dhvani sudhā pārāvāra; se dhvani paśibe kobe śrāvane āmāra
paśiyā abhīṣṭha siddhe ānande bāḍhābe; badhiratā vyādhi mora samūle nāśibe

"Alas, Śrīmatī Rādhike! O embodiment of auspiciousness! My ears are incomparibly deaf, and the sound of Your anklebells is like an ocean of nectar. When will this sound enter into my ears and increase the bliss that I desire there, thus destroying the disease of deafness at the root?"

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VERSE 13:

ŚAŚAKABHṚD ABHISĀRE NETRA-BHṚṄGĀÑCALĀBHYĀṀ
DIŚI VIDIŚI BHAYENODGHŪRṆITĀBHYĀṀ VANĀNI
KUVALAYADALA KOṢĀṆY EVA KLṚPTĀNI YĀBHYĀṀ
KIM U KILA KALANĪYO DEVI TĀBHYĀṀ JANO'YAM

śaśakabhṛd - in the moonlit night; *abhisāre* - during the rendez-vous; *netra* - eyes; *bhṛṅga* - bees; *añcalābhyāṁ* - with the corners; *diśi* - the four main directions; *vidiśi* - the four subdirections; *bhayena* - with fear; *udghūrṇitābhyāṁ* - spinning around; *vanāni* - the forests; *kuvalaya* - a kind of blue lotus flower; *dala* - petals; *koṣāṇi* - interiors; *eva* - surely; *klṛptāni* - made; *yābhyāṁ* - with which; *kim u* - what; *kila* - surely; *kalanīyo* - worthy to be seen; *devi* - O Goddess!; *tābhyāṁ* - by both; *jana ayam* - this person.

O my Goddess! When You go out to meet Kṛṣṇa in the moonlit night Your eyes fearfully move in all directions, like bumblebees turning the whole forest into blue lotus petal-interiors. Is this person not to be seen by these eyes?

Explanations: Every verse of Vilāpa Kusumāñjali shows the sweetness of Śrīla Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī's love for Śrīmatī Rādhikā. The sweetness of each of Her limbs constantly causes a stir in his heart. Although he is eternally liberated, he still relishes the sweetness of devotion-in-practice. That shows how relishable devotion is, even in the stage of

[24] This pastime is described by Śrīla Ānanda Gopāla Gosvāmī

practice (*sādhanā bhakti*), and that some *prema* is already present even in that initial stage. There is *sādhana bhakti, bhāva bhakti* and *prema bhakti* and they are qualitatively included in each other, although each stage is quantitatively superior to the previous. If it were not so, then how could the desire to relish *rasa* arise in the heart of the eternally perfect devotees? Their quality of *prema* will also exist to some extent in a practising devotee who follows them. The savour that comes from *sādhana* removes all consciousness of the external world and all external endeavours will then be connected with the heart's eagerness to attain the beloved deity. Thirst for loving devotion is the very life-force of *sādhana*, and if one performs one's *sādhana* well this thirst will surely arise. How eager a person like me is for sense-gratification! Even in my dreams I see only sense-objects! Those who do *bhajana* will think only of their beloved deity.[25] Śrīla Visvanātha Cakravartī describes the effect of *prema* on a loving devotee's heart as follows: *tataś cāsya bhaktajanasyātmātmīya gṛha vittādiṣu śata sahasraśo bhavatyo yāś citta vṛttayo mamatā rajjubhis teṣu teṣu nibaddha eva pūrvamāsan tā eva citta vṛttīḥ sarvā eva tatas tato'vahelayaivonmocya sva śaktyā māyikīr api tā mahā rasakūpa spṛśyamāna padārtha mātrāṇīva sākāra cidānanda jyotirmayīkṛtya tābhir eva mamatābhiḥ sarvābhis tatas tato vicitābhiḥ sva śaktyaiva tathābhūtī kṛtābhiḥ śrī bhagavad rūpa nāma guṇa mādhuryeṣu yo nibadhnāti so'yaṁ prema mahā kiraṇamālīva udayiṣyamāna eva nikhila puruṣārtha nakṣatra maṇḍalīḥ sahasaiva vilāpayati:* "In the stage of *sādhanā* the devotee is still bound by hundreds of thousands of ropes of possessiveness towards possessions, money, family and friends, but when *prema* appears these ropes will easily become spiritualised and will tightly bind the devotee to the beauty of the Lord's transcendental forms, qualities and pastimes. *prema* rises like the sun, making the darkness of ignorance and the stars of all other human pursuits fade from the sky of the heart."[26] In any good life of *sādhana* there must be some experience like this. "How many things don't I always miss in my life, but I never miss Rādhārāṇī! My mind is absorbed in thinking of sense-objects, I am not enthusiastic to do *bhajana* and I don't experience how insignificant this world is. I could not establish a sweet relationship with Rādhārāṇī - what kind of a devotee am I?" A practising devotee should rebuke himself like that. When taste for *bhajana* arises, the material world seems like a burning forest-fire and the devotee weeps for want of the service of his beloved deity. Śrīla Narottama Dāsa Ṭhākura sings:

hā hā prabhu koro doyā karuṇā sāgara; michā māyā jāle tanu dahiche āmāra
kobe heno daśā hobe sakhī saṅga pābo; vṛndāvane phula gāṅthi doṅhāke porābo
sanmukhe rohiyā kobe cāmara ḍhulābo; aguru candana gandha doṅhe aṅge dibo
sakhīra ājñāya kobe tāmbūla yogābo; sindūra tilaka kobe doṅhāke porābo
vilāsa kautuka keli dekhibo nayane; candra-mukha nirakhibo bosāye siṁhāsane
sadā se mādhurī dekhi manera lālase; koto dine hobe dayā narottama dāse

"O Lord! O ocean of mercy! My body burns in the false network of *māyā*! When will I attain the company of the *sakhīs*, string flower garlands in Vṛndāvana and hang them around Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa's necks (being a *mañjarī*) ? I will stand before Them and fan Them with a yaktail fan, and I will anoint Their limbs with *aguru* and sandalwood-scents. On the order of the *sakhīs* I will serve Them betel leaves and I will decorate Them with *tilaka* and *sindūra.* I will witness Their moonlike faces as They play Their funny pastimes and I will seat Them on a lion-throne. When will the day come that Narottama dāsa sees these sweet pastimes? My mind yearns for Their mercy!" (Prārthanā)

When life is full of devotion there will never be a lack of *prema. viṣayāntarair anavacchedyā tātparyāntaram asahamānā* (Prīti Sandarbha) "Devotion is not interrupted by other things and cannot tolerate ulterior motives." If, by the grace of Śrī Guru, sacred greed arises

[25] Up to here the explanation is given by Śrī Ānanda Gopāla Gosvāmī.

[26] From Mādhurya Kādambinī, Eighth Shower.

in the heart of the aspirant, he will surely gain such relish. *bhajana* means to seek. The practising devotee feels as if he has fallen away from his beloved deity, and he will cry out: "O Rādhe! where are You?" Every individual soul is qualified to become Rādhikā's maidservant; this is the great, rare gift of Śrīman Mahāprabhu. "Śrī Rādhā is the embodiment of *mahā bhāva*, will *māyā* drag me away from Her? O Rādhe! Will I be lashed by *māyā*, being Your maidservant?" In this way the heart will be squashed. Can Svāminī ignore the eager prayer of someone who has given up everything for Her sake? Taking Śyāma by the hand, She will come to witness the devotee's loving activities. *bhaktera prema ceṣṭā dekhi kṛṣṇera camatkāra* (C.C.) "Kṛṣṇa is astonished when He sees the loving endeavours of His devotees." The Lord is the relisher of *bhakti-rasa*, the honey of devotion. He told Arjuna:

patraṁ puṣpaṁ phalaṁ toyaṁ yo me bhaktyā prayacchati
tad ahaṁ bhakty upahṛtam aśnāmi prayatātmanaḥ
yat karoṣi yad aśnāsi yaj juhoṣi dadāsi yat
yat tapasyasi kaunteya tat kuruṣva mad arpaṇam

"I will eat any offering of leaves, flowers, fruits and water which anyone may offer to Me with love. O son of Kunti! Whatever you do, whatever you eat, whatever you sacrifice, whatever you give in charity and whatever penance you may perform - dedicate it all to Me!" {Bhagavad Gītā, 9.26-27} The devotee is also very eager to attain the Lord's merciful glance. How sweet is the relation between the devotee and the Lord!

When Śrī Raghunātha dāsa speaks this verse he sees a sweet pastime with his spiritual eyes. He sees himself as Tulasī Mañjarī, dressing up Śvāminī for Her rendez-vous in the moonlit night. To camouflage Her she has to dress Her up in fitting clothes and ornaments, so she dresses Her in a swan-like white *sārī*, anoints Her body with white sandal-paste and ornaments Her with pearls and diamonds, so that it seems as if Svāminī merges with the moonlight.[27]

ki kohobo rāika hari anurāga; niravadhi manahi manobhava jāga
sahaje rucira tanu sāji koto bhāti; abhisaru śārada pūnamika rāti
dhavala vasana tanu candana pūra; aruṇa adhare dharu viṣada kapūra
kavarī upore karu kunda vithāra; kaṇṭhe vilambita motima hāra
kairave jhāṁpalo karatala kāṅti; malayaja candana balayako pāṅti
cāndaki kaumudī tanu nahe cina; yaichana kṣīra nīra nahe bhina
chāyā vairī na choḍalo bāda; caraṇe śaraṇa koru yāminī ādha;
gopāla dāsa kohe - sucatura gorī; nūpura rasana tuli mukha purī

"What can I say about Rāi's passionate love for Hari? Cupid is constantly awaking in Her mind! Her body is naturally shining with beauty, and She goes out on rendez-vous in a full moon night in autumn. Her body is draped in a white dress, instead of Her usual blue one, and anointed with white sandalwood pulp. She puts white camphor-lipstick on Her red lips, Her braid is beautified with a garland of Kunda-flowers and a pearl necklace hangs and oscillates on Her neck. A white Kairava-lotus is placed in Her handpalm and rows of sandalwood-spots are made on Her jewelled bangles. In this way She cannot be distinguished anymore, just as the moonlight cannot be distinguished from the moon and water can no longer be distinguished from the milk it is poured into. The shadow, that accompanies every embodied soul in the moonlight or in the sunlight as an inseparable enemy, can not harm Her anymore, for the night has already surrendered to Her, saying: "Allright, for You there won't be any shadow anymore!" Gopāla dāsa further sings: "Thus clever Gorī (golden Rādhikā) goes

[27] Last paragraph and Gītā quotation by Śrī Ānanda Gopāla Gosvāmī.

out, loosening the strings of Her anklebells (so that their jingling will not betray Her)." Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī has written in Ujjvala Nīlamaṇi:

lajjayā sāṅga-līneva niḥśabdākhila maṇḍanā
kṛtāvaguṇṭhā snigdhaika sakhī yuktā priyaṁ vrajet

"It is as if the girl merges with Her own shyness. She has stifled all of her ornaments and covered herself with her veil as she goes on *abhisāra* with her loving girlfriends."

Svāminī holds Tulasī's hand and follows her on the forest path, fearfully looking here and there and saying: "Tulasi! I have no other shelter but you! Take me with you!" Her beautiful glances make the forest of Vṛndāvana even more beautiful than the carefully protected inner petals of a newly opened blue lotus flower. The wonderful beauty of Her eyes are as if awakening a flood of beauty on the chest of the environment's natural beauty. Svāminī is afraid, but Tulasī encourages Her, saying: "Come, come! Why are You afraid? I am here with You!"[28] Svāminī looks at Tulasī, who makes Her fearless. She feels consoled and silently walks on. Tulasī is Svāminī's shelter. Blessed is this maidservant, that she can render such service! She provides shelter to Svāminī, who is the shelter of Śrī Govinda, who is again the shelter of the whole world! Tulasī says: "I will bring You into the hands of He who eagerly sits down, hoping to meet You!" How incomparibly beautiful is the heart of this maidservant! "How unfortunate I am that I am deprived of this nectarean *rādhā-dāsya*, although I know everything about it! I always identify myself with my material body and I never think of myself as Rādhā's maidservant. I'm simply mad after profit, adoration and distinction! Mercy is the only hope!" Tulasī takes Svāminī along, making Her fearless.

pūrati manoratha gati anivāra; gurukula kaṇṭaka ki koroye pāra
surata śiṅgāra kiriti sama bhāsa; milali nikuñje koho govinda dāsa

"The course of the fulfillment of desires cannot be stopped. Can the thorny thicket in the form of Her superiors be crossed?" Govinda dāsa says: "She shines like the personified splendor of eros' fame and glory as She meets Govinda in the *nikuñja*." (Pada Kalpataru)

Tulasī enters the trysting-*kuñja* with Śrī Rādhā, who is dressed in white, like the fame and glory of the ornamentation of amorous enjoyment. Śyāma is eagerly waiting and he floats in an ocean of *rasa* when He sees Tulasī and Svāminī coming. Holding Svāminī's hand, Tulasī says: "A moonlit night! Fear of superiors! Day-like illumination! With unlimited expertise I have brought Your Sukumārī (tender girl) here! Here! Take Your beloved!", and places Svāminī's hand in Kṛṣṇa's hand. As Śrī Raghunātha dāsa stretches out his hand, he doesn't catch anything anymore. The revelation has disappeared and he begins to lament: "Alas, O Svāmini! When will that boundlessly sweet glance of Yours become visible to my eyes?" [29] Raghunātha's life-airs reach his throat when he feels this agony of love-in-separation.
Śrī Rasika-Candra Dāsa sings:

hāya devi! kobe hobe sudina emon
śārada purṇimā nisi, jyotsnā plāvita diśi,
abhisāre koribe gamana

"Alas, O devi! When will that blessed day be mine when You will go out to meet Kṛṣṇa in the fullmoon autumn-night, which is inundated by moonlight?"

mone boḍo bhaya pāi, diśi diśi neharāi,

[28] Description by Śrī Ānanda Gopāla Gosvāmī.
[29] The final paragraph is described by Śrīla Ānanda Gopāla Gosvāmī

netra bhṛṅga hoibe cañcala
cāhite nayana kone, śyāmala śrī vṛndāvane,
vikaśibe kuvalaya dala.

"You are very much afraid at heart and Your restless bee-like eyes move in all directions. While You look at bluish Śrī Vṛndāvana from the corners of Your eyes the Kuvalaya-lotuspetals begin to blossom."

se kṛpā kaṭāksa kaṇe, kobe e dāsīra pāne,
cāhibe go nija karuṇāya
ei se sukhera sāra, ihā vinā kichu āra,
nāhi cāi tuyā rāṅgā pāy

"When will You mercifully cast a drop of Your glance at this maidservant? That is the quintessence of happiness! I don't want anything else but Your lotus feet!"

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VERSE 14:

YAD AVADHI MAMA KĀCIN MAÑJARĪ RŪPA PŪRVĀ
VRAJABHUVI BATA NETRA DVANDVA DĪPTIṀ CAKĀRA
TAD AVADHI TAVA VṚNDĀRAṆYA-RĀJÑI PRAKĀMAṀ
CARAṆA KAMALA LĀKṢĀ SAṀDIDṚKṢĀ MAMĀBHŪT

yat - what; *avadhi* - until; *mama* - my; *kācit* - some; *mañjarī* - maidservant; *rūpa pūrvā* - named Rūpa; *vrajabhuvi* - in Vraja; *bata* - alas!; *netra* - eye; *dvandva* - couple; *dīptiṁ* - shining; *cakāra* - did; *tad avadhi* - from then; *tava* - Your; *vṛndāraṇya* - Vṛndāvana; *rājñi* - O queen!; *prakāmaṁ* - strong desire; *caraṇa* - feet; *kamala* - lotus; *lākṣā* - lac; *saṁdidṛkṣā* - completely see; *mama* - mine; *abhūt* - became.

O Queen of Vṛndāvana! Ever since some mañjarī named Rūpa filled my eyes with light in Vrajabhūmi, I have strongly desired to see the red lac on Your lotus feet!

Explanations: In the previous verse Śrī Raghunātha attained a very sweet vision of Śrīmatī's *śuklābhisāra* (rendez-vous in the moonlit night), and when that vision vanishes he experiences intolerable pain of separation. The more bliss was felt during union, the more misery is felt during separation. The maidservants of Śrī Rādhā are the embodiments of devotional service, and when they are deprived of that service they are feeling so much pain! Only the merciful glance of Svāminī can revive the maidservant. Even in the stage of practice a devotee must have some experience of this. When there is no experience *bhajana* can be called lifeless. "I am chanting the holy name, but I don't relish the sweetness of the name. I am performing all items of devotion, like hearing, chanting and deity-worship, just like a machine!" In Śrīmad Bhāgavata it is said - just as the body is nourished, strengthened and

relieved from hunger by every mouthful of food that we take, devotion, experience of God and renunciation of sense-gratification all appear simultaneously when we do *bhajana.*

bhaktiḥ pareśānubhavo viraktir anyatra caiṣa trika eka kālaḥ
prapadyamānasya yathāśnataḥ syus tuṣṭiḥ puṣṭiḥ kṣud apāyo'nughāsam

(Śrīmad Bhāgavata 11.2.42)

There's no shortage of helpers on the path of devotion. Even if a devotee falls there are always people behind him that will pick him up.[30] The *devas* prayed as follows to Śrī Kṛṣṇa in His mother's womb *(garbha-stuti,* Śrīmad Bhāgavata 10.2.33)

tathā na te mādhava tāvakāḥ kvacid bhraśyanti mārgāt tvayi baddha sauhṛdāh
tvayābhiguptā vicaranti nirbhayā vināyakānīkapa mūrdhnasu prabho

"O Mādhava! The devotee can never fall from the path of *sādhana* like the dry scholars and proud and offensive persons (that were discussed in the previous Bhāgavata-verse) can, because they are bound by love for You. O Lord! You are always protecting them, so they fearlessly step over the heads of all different obstacles and become blessed by attaining the service of Your lotus feet." *vināyakānīkapa mūrdhnasu viśeṣena caranti nirbhayatvena tān eva mahā vighnavargeśān vighnakaraṇārtham āgatān sopānānīva kṛtvā śrī vaikuṇṭha-padam ārohantīty arthaḥ. teṣām bhakti vighne hy anutāpaḥ syāt tena ca śrī bhagavato mahatī kṛpā syād iti* (Vaiṣṇava Toṣaṇī *ṭīkā*). "They will step over the heads of all obstacles" means that, although certainly great obstacles may cross the path of a progressive devotee, the devotee will simply step over them just as one steps on the stairs of a staircase, and thus ascends to Śrī Vaikuṇṭha, the blissful abode of God. In other words, if the devotee falls down he will greatly repent within his mind and the resultant feelings of humility, anxiety and eagerness will help him to attain the great mercy of the Lord and thus become blessed."

Experience in the *bhajana* of Rādhā-*dāsya* is inevitable. It is as if the maidservant hears Svāminī calling her! It is as if the voice of Svāminī, whose heart is most soft out of compassion, is anointed with the nectar of love when She calls Her maidservant. This is not attainable through a small amount of fortune! When such transcendental visions (*sphūrtis*) become very vivid it is as if it is all really happening, and when the vision vanishes the devotee laments in a heartrending way, becoming totally overwhelmed. In this way an unbroken stream of relish goes on, during visions and as well as after the disappearance of those visions. The relish of the practising devotee's *sādhana* is also not small. But an offender like me is deprived of this relish; I am chanting because I have a certain quota, but I don't taste the nectar of the holy name. Why should my *bhajana* be finished after I have completed my quota? The quota should be dependent on the relish - that is desirable. The devotee should have a natural love for his *bhajana* just as a materialist has a natural love for his wife, children and money. The heart should be filled with eagerness; he should wander around, crying out: "Where are You, Rādhārāṇī?!" The *tāraka brahma nāma* (transcendental saviour holy name) *hare Kṛṣṇa* is in the eighth, vocative, case. The Lord should be called wholeheartedly by chanting these names, just as a mother is called for by a lost child, or as a husband is called for by his chaste and loving wife when he is abroad. "I am Your maidservant, but I have never seen You! Where are You, in which *kuñja* or behind which tree are You hiding? Please show Yourself to me once!"[31]

dekhā diyā prāṇa rākho, maritechi ei dekho,

[30] Till here the explanation is by Śrī Ānanda Gopāla Gosvāmī.
[31] Explanation in this paragraph is by Śrī Ānanda Gopāla Gosvāmī

karuṇā kaṭākṣa koro dāna
doṅhe sahacarī saṅge, madana mohana bhaṅga,
śrī kuṇḍe kalapa taru chāya,
āmāre karuṇā kori, dekhāibe se mādhurī.
tabe hoy jīvana upāya

"Save my life by revealing Yourself! Look, I'm dying! Please cast a merciful glance on me! My life can only be saved if You kindly show me Your sweet self with Madana Mohana and Your *sakhīs*, standing in the shade of a wish-yielding tree on the bank of Rādhākuṇḍa!"

Śrīla Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī is crying out of separation, inundating the bank of Rādhākunda with his loving tears. Suddenly a trancendental vision comes to him. Svāminī calls him in this spiritual revelation: "Tulasi!" How sweetly is She calling! Her voice is like a stream of nectar that cools off Tulasī's heart, that is afflicted by separation. When Tulasī looks around she sees Svāminī standing before her. How many tears of compassion are streaming from Her eyes, that are illuminated by *mahābhāva*, as She calls Her maidservant with a tender heart filled with compassion and a voice anointed with the nectar of love! That honey-sweet voice of Svāminī is like the nectar of hope that Tulasi has carried in her heart for so long: "Tell Me, Tulasi! Why do you want to see only Me?" Śrī Raghunātha dāsa, in his spiritual absorption, gives the answer in this verse: "O Svāmini! Ever since I met this Śrī Rūpa Mañjarī, who is Your merciful gift and who has opened my eyes by teaching me how to serve You, I have desired to see the red lac on Your lotuslike feet!"[32]

Śrīmatī Rūpa Mañjarī is the personification of the mellow of service and she is the leader of all the maidservants of Śrī Rādhā. She has a most intimate friendship with Tulasī Mañjarī. In his 'Sva Saṅkalpa Prakāśa Stotram', Śrī Dāsa Gosvāmī shows the desire to learn expertise in all kinds of devotional service from the eight girlfriends of Śrī Rādhikā (*aṣṭa sakhī*), but the prayers themselves, particularly the prayers for the divine Couple's confidential service, are personally directed to Śrīmatī Rūpa Mañjarī's lotus feet!

samānaṁ nirvāhya smara sadasi saṁgrāmam atulaṁ
tad ājñātaḥ sthitvā milita tanu nidrāṁ gatavatoḥ
tayor yugmaṁ yuktyā tvaritam abhisaṁgamya kutukāt
kadāhaṁ seviṣye sakhi kusuma puñja vyajana bhāk

"O *sakhi* Rūpa Mañjari! When the divine Couple completes Their erotic battle in Cupid's assembly Their bodies meet in sleep. When will I, on Their order, quickly approach Them and eagerly serve Them by moving a fan of flowers?"

mudā kuñje guñjad bhramara nikare puṣpa śayanaṁ
vidhāyārān mālā ghusṛṇa madhu vīṭi viracanam
punaḥ kartuṁ tasmin smara vilasitāny utkada manasos
tayos toṣāyālam vidhumukhi vidhāsyāmi kim ahaṁ

"O moon-faced girl! When the divine Couple becomes eager for lovemaking once more on Their bed of flowers in a *kuñja* full of humming bees, will I be able to please Them by blissfully preparing garlands, *kuṅkuma*, honey wine and betel-leaves for Them?"

In his 'Prārthanā Gīti', Śrīla Narottama Dāsa Ṭhākura has described how the practising devotee who attains perfection in his maidservanthood (*sādhana siddha kiṅkarī*) is introduced to the Divine Couple by Śrī Rūpa Mañjarī:

[32] This paragraph is by Śrī Ānanda Gopāla Gosvāmī.

prabhu lokanātha kobe saṅge loyā jābe; śrī rūpera pāda-padme more samarpibe
ei nava dāsī boli śrī rūpa cāhibe; heno śubha kṣaṇa mora koto dine hobe
śīghra ājñā koriben - dāsi hethā āya! sevāra susajjā kārya koroho tvarāya
ānandita hoiyā hiyā tāra ājñā bole; pavitra monete kārya koribo tatkāle
sevāra sāmagrī ratna thālete koriyā; suvāsita vāri svarṇa jhārite pūriyā
doṅhāra sammukhe lo'ye dibo śīghragati; narottamera daśā kobe hoibe emati
śrī rūpa paścāte āmi rohibo bhīta hoiyā; doṅhe puna kohiben āmā pāne cāiyā
sadaya hṛdaye doṅhe kohiben hāsi; kothāy pāile rūpa ei nava dāsī?
śrī rūpa mañjarī tabe doṅha vākya śuni; mañjulālī dilo more ei dāsī āni!
ati namra citta āmi ihāra jānilo; sevā kārya diyā tabe hethāya rākhilo
heno tattva doṅhākāra sākṣāte kohiyā; narottame sevāya dibe niyukta koriyā

"When will my master Lokanātha Gosvāmī take me along and submit me to Śrī Rūpa (Gosvāmī or *mañjarī*)'s lotus feet? When will that blessed moment come when Śrī Rūpa Mañjarī will look at me and call me 'this new maidservant', quickly ordering me: "O *dāsi*! Come here! Quickly get the paraphernalia of your service!'? My heart will be filled with joy when she orders me like this, and I will do my service with a pure heart. I will keep my paraphernalia for service on a jewelled plate, fill up a golden pitcher with scented water and quickly come before Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa. When will Narottama Dāsa attain that state? I will shyly stand behind Śrī Rūpa as Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa look at me again, smile and ask Rūpa with kind hearts: "O Rūpa! Where did you get this new maidservant?' Hearing Their inquiry, Śrī Rūpa Mañjarī then tells Them: 'Mañjulālī Mañjarī (the spiritual name of Śrīla Lokanātha Gosvāmī) has given me this maidservant to bring her before You! Knowing her to be very humble I kept her there to serve You". After telling Them this directly she will engage Narottama dāsa in Their service."

In this way the chief maidservant of Śrī Rādhā, Śrīmatī Rūpa Mañjarī, descended to earth along with Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu in the age of Kali in the form of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī, to preach the message about the *rasika* pastimes of Vṛndāvana, that had become lost in due course of time. Śrīla Narottama dāsa Thākura sings:

prema bhakti rīti yoto, nija granthe suvekata
likhiyāchen dui mahāśaya
yāhāra śravaṇa hoite, premānande bhāse cite,
yugala madhura rasāśraya

"These two saints revealed all the ways of loving devotion in their own books. By hearing these topics the heart floats in ecstatic love and one takes shelter of the *madhura rasa* (amorous mellow)".

yugala kiśora prema, lakṣa bāṇa yeno hema
heno dhana prakāśilo yārā
jaya rūpa sanātana, deho more prema dhana
se ratana more gole hārā

"They revealed the love of the Adolescent Pair of Vṛndāvana, which is as pure as gold molten a hundred thousand times. All glories to Rūpa and Śanātana! Please give me this treasure of love! I will wear this gift like a jewel necklace around my neck!"

Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī has given the world sublime scientific *rasa*-scriptures, books like 'Bhakti Rasāmrta Sindhu' and 'Ujjvala Nīlamaṇi', in which he taught the practising devotees the truth about *rasa* (spiritual flavours), *prema* (love of God) and *sādhanā* (devotional practice), so that some fortunate practitioners have been able to enter into the confidential truths of Godhead. He has also written prayers, praises, poetry and theatre-plays in which he revealed the spiritual flavours of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa's pastimes and the mood of Their

maidservants (*mañjarī bhāva*). Śrīla Rāmānanda Rāya, the foremost of *rasika* devotees in the world, first read these masterpieces to Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu near the cottage of Śrīla Haridāsa Ṭhākura at Purī. In Caitanya Caritāmṛta Śrī Kṛṣṇa dāsa Kavirāja writes:

eto śuni rāya kohe prabhura caraṇe; rūpera kavitva praśaṁsi sahasra vadane
kavitva nā hoy ei - amṛtera dhāra; nāṭaka lakṣaṇa sab siddhāntera sāra
prema paripāṭī ei adbhuta varṇana; śuni citta karṇera hoy ānanda ghūrṇana
tomāra śakti vinu jīve nahe ei vāṇī; tumi śakti diyā kahāo heno anumāni

Hearing this, Rāmānanda Rāya submitted to the Lord's lotus feet: "I praise the poetry of Rūpa with a thousand mouths. This is not poetry - it is a stream of nectar. It contains all the definitions of drama and the quintessence of all philosophical conclusions. These wonderful descriptions show his loving expertise and when the ears hear it they become dizzy of ecstatic love. Without Your power no ordinary living entity can speak like this. I suppose You are empowering him to speak like that!" The Lord later personally confirmed that Śrīla Rāmānanda Rāya was not mistaking:

prabhu kohe - prayāge ihāra hoilo milana; ihāra guṇe ihāte āmāra tuṣṭa hoilo mana
madhura prasanna ihāra kāvya sālaṅkāra; aiche kavitva vinu nahe rasera pracāra
sabhe kṛpā kori ihāre deha ei vara - vraja līlā prema rasa varṇe nirantara

"The Lord said: "When I met him at Prayāga My mind was pleased with his qualities. I am very pleased with his poetry with all its embellishments; without such poetry there can be no preaching of *rasa*. Everyone should be merciful to him and bless him with this boon - let him always describe the *prema-rasa* of Vraja-*līlā*!"

Tulasī tells Svāminī: "It was by Rūpa Mañjarī's grace that I'm now fixed in Your service, and now I desire to see the red lac on Your lotus-like footsoles! And not just seeing - *saṁdidṛkṣā*, completely seeing. And when can I admire that red lac more than when it shines on a blackish background? It would be very sweet if Your red lac would perk on Śyāma's blackish chest! I want to see Your lover's eagerness to color His chest so beautifully with this lac. I don't want to see only You, I also like to see Your Śyāma, if He is Yours! Although I am not really eager to see Śyāma on the strenght of having taken shelter of Your lotus feet, I will automatically still get to see Him also." *rādhikā caraṇa reṇu, bhūṣaṇa koriyā tanu, anāyāse pābe giridhārī* (Prema Bhakti Candrikā) "When you decorate your body with Śrī Rādhikā's footdust you will easily get Giridhārī". This is the internal meaning of the word *saṁdidṛkṣā*. There is no end to the stream of Raghunātha's visions.[33]

Śrī Rasika-Candra dāsa sings:

śuno ayi vṛndāvaneśvari!
yei hoite vraja mājhe, tava paricaryā kāje,
niyojiyā śrī rūpa mañjarī
kṛpā kori du'nayane, cāhilā dāsīra pāne,
tad avadhi bāḍhilo piyāsa.
tomāra caraṇa yuge, ujjvala alakta rāge,
darśana korite abhilāṣa

"O Queen of Vṛndāvana! Hear me! Ever since Śrī Rūpa Mañjarī engaged me in Your devotional service here in Vraja, mercifully glancing at this maidservant with her two eyes, my thirst to see the splendid lac on Your lotus feet greatly increased!"

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[33] This pastime is described by Śrīla Ānanda Gopāla Gosvāmī.

tribhuvane anupama, śyāmarūpa manorama,
tāhā heri yoto sukha pāi.
tāhe yadi lāge tava, yāvakera cihna lava,
daraśane sukha adhikāi.

"When I see the lac-marks on Your footsoles I find even more bliss then when I see the beautiful form of Śyāma, which is matchless within the three worlds!"

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VERSE 15:

YADĀ TAVA SAROVARAṀ SARASA BHṚṄGA SAṄGHOLLASAT
SARORUHA KULOJJVALAṀ MADHURA VĀRI SAMPŪRITAM
SPHUṬAT SARASIJĀKṢI HE NAYANA-YUGMA SĀKṢĀD VABHAU
TADAIVA MAMA LĀLASĀJANI TAVAIVA DĀSYE RASE

yadā - when; *tava* - Your; *sarovaraṁ* - pond; *sarasa* - humming; *bhṛṅga* - bees; *saṅgha* - multitude; *ullasat* - blissful; *saroruha* - waterlotuses; *kula* - multitude; *ujjvalaṁ* - glistening; *madhura* - sweet; *vāri* - water; *sampūritam* - filled; *sphuṭat* - blooming; *sarasija* - waterlotus; *akṣi* - eyes; *he* - O!; *nayana* - eyes; *yugma* - couple; *sākṣād* - directly; *vabhau* - appeared; *tadā* - then; *eva* - only; *mama* - mine; *lālasā* - desire; *ajani* - appeared; *tava* - Your; *eva* - only; *dāsye* - service; *rase* - the spiritual flavour.

O blooming lotus-eyed girl (Rādhe)! When my eyes directly saw Your pond (Rādhākuṇḍa), which is filled with sweet water and lotus flowers surrounded by blissfully humming bees, then I really got the desire to taste the nectar of Your service!

Explanations: In the previous verse Śrī Raghunātha dāsa prayed to Śrīmatī that he may once see Her lotus feet anointed with lac-dye, and in this verse he prays for the actual service of these anointed lotus feet, having become greedy for that service. "O lotus-eyed Rādhe! Ever since I got to see Your lake I developed a liking for Your devotional service!" Śrī Rādhākuṇḍa is the limitlessly beautiful crown jewel of Vraja, Priyājī's Sarasī which is most dear to those whose everything is the service of Śrī Rādhikā's lotus feet.

kuṇḍera mādhurī heno rādhāra mādhurimā; kuṇḍera mahimā yeno rādhāra mahimā
sei kuṇḍe eka bāra yei kore snāna; tāre rādhā sama prema Kṛṣṇa kore dāna

"The *kuṇḍa* is as sweet as Rādhā's sweetness and the *kuṇḍa* is as great as Rādhā's greatness. Śrī Kṛṣṇa will bestow a love equal to that of Rādhā's to anyone who bathes even once in this *kuṇḍa*" {C.C. Madhya 18, 11-10}. Only the experienced devotees understand the complete feelings of possessiveness of the Rādhā-*niṣṭhā* devotees (those who are completely loyal to Rādhā), who love Priyājī with their whole hearts and who have offfered their hearts to Her lotus feet, towards Śrī Rādhākuṇḍa. It is here that Śrī-Śrī Rādhā Mādhava eternally play Their midday-pastimes, and there is no place so dear to Them as this. The *kuṇḍa* is related to

Svāminī as being non-different from Her, so along with the *kuṇḍa* those devotees who are surrendered to Her see the *līlā*. Śrīpāda says: "When I beheld the beauty of Your lake I developed a yearning for Your service!" The bank of Rādhākuṇḍa is really wonderful: There are divine Kadamba-, Campaka-, Kunda-, Śirīṣa-, Ketakī- and Kiṁśuka-trees as well as beautiful Lavaṅga- (clove), Jātī-, Yūthī- and Mādhavī-vines. There are many different fragrant flowers and Śuka- and Śārikā-parrots are sitting on the branches of the trees, singing sweet songs (*rasa-gāna*) about Rādhikā and Mādhava. Cuckoos sing in the fifth note, and bees are humming, so many birds are chirping and the peacocks spread their tail-feathers out as they sweetly dance and cry out: '*ke ka*!'. The great branches of the trees, that beautify all the banks of the *kuṇḍa*, are studded with goosepimples of ecstasy, which they show in the form of their knots, and they shed tears of ecstasy in the form of the honey that trickles from their flowers. The water that fills Rādhākuṇḍa and Śyāmakuṇḍa, sweet and filled with many colorful lotus flowers, is not actually water, it is the splendid spiritual erotic flavour of Rādhā and Mādhava's pastimes! These things can only be seen with spiritual eyes that are anointed with the salve of love. Materialistic people cannot see it as it is. In *antar daśā* (internal consciousness) we practise *līlāmaya bhakti* (devotion that is filled with the transcendental pastimes).

doṅhāra ujjvala madhura ye rasa varṇa viparyaya kori;
bhakte sukha dite rahasya sahite āche sara nāma dhari
e kāraṇa bhakta sara kori vyakta se rase koriyā snāna;
kṛṣṇera kṛpāya rādhā sama prema lābha kore bhāgyavān
śrī Kṛṣṇa yokhon rādhā daraśana lāgi utkaṇṭhita hoy;
sakala upāya viphala hoiyā rādhākuṇḍāśraya loy
tat kāle rādhāra pāya daraśana emati kuṇḍa prabhāva;
rādhāra-o temati śyāmakuṇḍāśraye Kṛṣṇa saṅga hoy lābha

"The syllables *ra-sa* stand for the sweet splendid love of the Divine Couple Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa, and when these syllables are reversed we get the word *sa-ra*, or lake. This secret makes the devotees very happy.Therefore the devotees reveal that *sara* (lake) by bathing in that *rasa*, and by Kṛṣṇa's grace they become blessed by attaining a love for Kṛṣṇa that is equal to that of Śrī Rādhā's. When Kṛṣṇa becomes eager to see Rādhā, and all His endeavours fail, He takes shelter of Rādhākuṇḍa. At that moment He gets the audience of Rādhā on the strength of the *kuṇḍa*. In the same way Rādhā also takes shelter of Śyāmakuṇḍa and thus attains the company of Śrī Kṛṣṇa."

Amazing lotus flowers, lilies and Kahlāra-flowers are covering the sweet water of the *kuṇḍa*, surrounded by buzzing bees that become intoxicated by their fragrance. The chest (surface) of the *kuṇḍa* also bears many beautiful lordly swans and cranes that sing beautiful songs. When Kṛṣṇa sees this Rādhākuṇḍa He remembers Śrī Rādhikā and when Śrī Rādhikā sees Śyāmakuṇḍa She similarly remembers Kṛṣṇa. The *kuṇḍa* is related to Śrī Rādhā in all respects, and while Raghunātha describes the way he sees the *kuṇḍa* he simultaneously describes the self-manifest pastimes that take place there. At noontime Śrīla Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī anxiously cries out of grief, sitting on the bank of Rādhākuṇḍa, as he suddenly perceives one very sweet pastime: He sees Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa playing in the water. The loser of this water-splashing game must give a prize to the winner. Kundalatā is the referee and the prize is nectar from the lips (kisses) of the loser. Rādhikā first splashes Kṛṣṇa. How beautiful Her eyes are!

taṁ siṣeca kara-paṅkaja koṣaiḥ sāmbubhiḥ samaṇi kaṅkaṇa ghoṣaiḥ
vāruṇāstram eva tat kusumeṣor atyasahyam abhavad vijigīṣoḥ
śaślathe bhagavatī vanamālā hāra yaṣṭir apatat suviśālā
eka eva balavān priya dehe kaustubhaḥ paribhavaṁ na viṣehe

(Kṛṣṇāhnika Kaumudī 4/146, 149)

"How sweetly Her jewelled bangles jingle around Her lotuswhorl-like hands! It is as if Cupid wants to defeat Kṛṣṇa with His watermissile! It's become intolerable for Kṛṣṇa! His garland of divine forest flowers loosens, His big pearl necklace falls off and His stick falls out of His hand; only His powerful Kaustubha-gem is able to tolerate this stream of water without lamenting!" Īśvarī thinks tender Śyāmasundara will suffer too much if She splashes in His eyes, so She doesn't do that, but cruel Śyāma, desiring victory, does splash Sukumārī's (tender Rādhikā's) eyes all too hard, saying: "Priye! See if You can tolerate this!"

sahyatām ayam ayaṁ mama pāthaḥ seka ity atha nigadya sa nāthaḥ
preyasī vadana eva saharṣaḥ sasmitaṁ sarasam ambu vavarṣaḥ

(Kṛṣṇāhnika Kaumudī 4,150)

Tulasī watches on the bank of the *kuṇḍa* how Rādhā and Śyāma have a huge fight in the water. The *sakhīs* rebuke Śyāma, saying: "Śyāma! Don't splash our *sakhī* like that! Has She ever done that with You? Just see how much She suffers!", but Śyāma does not listen. Svāminī becomes mad from His splashing, although She is normally so grave, and She backs away. What can a *sukumārī* (tender girl) do against such a powerful wrestler? Śrī Līlāśuka (Bilvamaṅgala Ṭhākura) calls Kṛṣṇa *ānanda* (ecstasy), and on the mouth of that *ānanda* a *śṛṅgāra-rasa* (erotic flavour) smile blooms up. He does not play any other games than the games of *śṛṅgāra rasa*. Rasamaya Kṛṣṇa and Rasamayī Rādhā shower Each other with nothing else but *rasa* during Their *rasa-krīḍā* (delectable games), and the devotees that are fixed in *smaraṇa* are constantly showered with the sweet relish of this *rasa-krīḍā.* These pastimes can only be attended in *svarūpāveśa*. When the mind returns to the external world this *svarūpāveśa* disappears, therefore Śrīla Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura sings: *sādhana smaraṇa līlā, ihāte nā koro helā, kāya mane koriyā susāra* "Do not neglect the practice of *līlā smaraṇa*; make it the essence of everything for your body and mind!" It is the nature of these transcendental pastimes to draw the mind towards one's *siddha svarūpa*. That sacred greed that is the only and essential requirement for entering into *rāgānugā bhakti* is also awakening the revelation of these transcendental pastimes. When a fortunate devotee hears about the sweetness of these feelings this sacred greed arises in his heart.

tat tad bhāvādi mādhurye śrute dhīr yad apekṣate
nātra śāstraṁ na yuktiṁ ca tal lobhotpatti lakṣaṇam

"The definition of the birth of transcendental greed is that when one hears about the sweetness of the moods and pastimes of Kṛṣṇa and His Vraja-devotees one becomes attracted up to the point that one is not sensitive to the instruction of the revealed scriptures anymore, nor to logical arguments." (Bhakti Rasāmṛta Sindhu 1.2.292) Experience will come automatically while hearing about these sweet moods. These topics while destroy bodily consciousness and will nourish the *siddha svarūpa*. One who becomes lusty after hearing these topics is unfortunate. Śrī Śuka Muni says: "The topics of Rādhā and Mādhava's loving affairs will cure the heart's disease of lust and will bless the hearer with the highest possible devotion to the Lord (which is undoubtedly *mañjarī bhāva*)."[34]

Śyāma claps in His hands and says: "You're defeated! You're vanquished! Give Me My prize! I'm the victor!" But nobody, not even the parrots in the trees, sings Kṛṣṇa's glories. All

[34] See the final verse of the Rāsa-pañcādhyāya in Śrīmad Bhāgavata (*vikrīḍitaṁ vrajavadhūbhiḥ* etc., verse 10.33.40) and its commentary by Śrī Jīva Gosvāmī.

the creatures in Vraja feel sorry for Rādhikā. How beautiful are Svāminī's eyes when Śyāma holds Her around the neck! Although Her eyes are filled with water She still keeps them wide open. Śrī Raghunātha dāsa addresses Her here as *sphuṭat sarasijākṣi*: blooming lotus-eyed girl! Her eyes have become slightly reddish from all the water, although they are usually compared to blue lotus flowers by the *mahā janas*.

alasa locana heri kājare ujala; jale bosi tapa kore nīla utapala

"When they see Rādhikā's languid eyes, made up with eyeliner, the blue lotus flowers sit in the water and perform penances (to become as beautiful as them)." *indivara vara garava garāsita khañjana gañjana nayanā* "These eyes (of Rādhikā) swallow the pride of the most excellent of blue lotus flowers (in colour) and the wagtailbirds (in restlessness)." How bold is our Nāgara! When He collects His prize (of kisses) Svāminī, wanting to know what He's doing exactly, does not close Her eyes completely, but keeps them slightly opened. Then, when Śyāma has collected His prize, Svāminī dives under water, feeling ashamed before Her girlfriends. Nobody noticed where She went. There are shining red, blue, white and golden lotus flowers floating on the *kuṇḍa* (*saroruha kulojjvalam*) and Svāminī surfaces in a cluster of golden lotus flowers, where Śhe remains unnoticed (since Her face resembles a golden lotus flower also). *padme mukhe nā pāri cinite* (C.C.) Suddenly the bees become attracted to Her extraordinary fragrance and leave all the other lotus flowers to come to Her face, humming sweetly and blissfully (*sarasa bhṛṅga saṅghollasat*). The *sakhīs* meanwhile tell Śyāma: "What have You done to our *sakhī* ? Go and look for Her!" Our Hero sees the many bees buzzing around the golden lotuses, so He goes there and catches Śrīmatī. The *sakhīs* also go there. Śyāma brags: "Priye! If I would hide like this, You and Your girlfriends would never find Me!" Svāminī proudly says: "O yes? Allright, hide out then! I'll surely find You!" Śyāmasundara dives into a cluster of blue lotus flowers. While searching, Svāminī notices that the monkeys, that sit on the branches of the trees that hang over the *kuṇḍa*, are staring at this cluster of blue lotus flowers. She understands that Śyāma must be hiding there, so She goes there and catches Him. Then She swims across the deep *kuṇḍa*, holding on to Śyāma's neck. *tiṅho Kṛṣṇa kaṇṭha dhari, bhāse jalera upori, gajotkhāte yaiche kamalinī* (C.C.) "She floats upon the water, holding on to Kṛṣṇa's neck like a female lotus flower picked by an elephant." The whole *kuṇḍa* is illuminated by Rādhā and Śyāma's sweet bodily luster. How happy the *kuṇḍa* is to get her own Īśvarī swimming at her chest! Seeing this sweet pastime Tulasī is completely overwhelmed. How much joy the sweet water shows by making high waves! *madhura vāri sampūritam*. How sweet this pastime is! Tulasī Mañjarī is beside herself of ecstasy when she sees it. Suddenly the spiritual vision disappears and remembering this pastime she says: "My mind became immersed in the spiritual flavour of Your service, as my eyes directly saw Your *kuṇḍa*".[35] In his Rādhākuṇḍāṣṭakam {5} Śrī Raghunātha dāsa has confirmed that the desirevine of love for Kṛṣṇa of even an ignorant and unqualified person who performs some service at Rādhākuṇḍa in the form of bathing there, living there, seeing it or touching it, will blossom and bear the fruits of Rādhā's service:

api jana iha kaścid yasya sevā prasādaiḥ praṇaya suralatā syāttasya goṣṭhendra sūnoḥ
sapadi kila mad īśā dāsya puṣpa praśasyās tadati surabhi rādhākuṇḍam evāśrayo me

That is the inconceivable potency of seeing and touching Rādhākuṇḍa. "When I saw the sweetness of Your *kuṇḍa* I became attracted to Your devotional service. I don't want anything else but that anymore. May that very fragrant and beautiful Rādhākuṇḍa be my only shelter!" Śrī Haripada Śila sings:

[35] Last paragraph narrated by Śrī Ānanda Gopāla Gosvāmī.

vikasita paṅkajākṣi śuno vinodini; ye mora lālasā prāṇe kohitechi āmi
rādhā sama rādhākuṇḍa ati manohara; phuṭiyāche nānā jāti kamala nikara
sarovara paripūrṇa amṛta salile; bhramarā bhramarī guñje padma dale dale
daraśane pulakita mora tanu mana; lālasā jāgilo rādhā caraṇa sevana
vilāpa kusumāñjali korile smaraṇa; haripada premāṅkura hoibe udgame

"O Vinodini with the blooming lotuslike eyes! Please hear about my heart's desire! Śrī Rādhākuṇḍa, which is just as supremely enchanting as Śrī Rādhā Herself, is filled with different species of blooming flowers. This lake is filled with nectar-like water and lotus flowers that attract swarms of humming male and female bees to each of their petals. My mind and body are startled when I see this and so the desire for Rādhā's lotus feet has awoken. The sprout of *prema* is born in the heart of Haripada when he thus remembers Vilāpa Kusumāñjali."

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VERSE 16:

PĀDĀBJAYOS TAVA VINĀ VARA DĀSYAM EVA
NĀNYAT KADĀPI SAMAYE KILA DEVI YĀCE
SAKHYĀYA TE MAMA NAMO'STU NAMO'STU NITYAṀ
DĀSYĀYA TE MAMA RASO'STU RASO'STU SATYAM

pādābjayoḥ - of the two lotus feet; *tava* - Your; *vinā* - without; *vara* - excellent; *dāsyam* - service; *eva* - only; *na* - not; *anyat* - else; *kadāpi* - ever; *samaye* - at any time; *kila* - certainly; *devi* - O Goddess!; *yāce* - I pray; *sakhyāya* - unto friendship; *te* - Your; *mama* - my; *namaḥ* - obeisances; *astu* - let there be; *nama* - obeisances; *astu* - let it be; *nityaṁ* - forever; *dāsyāya* - unto Your service; *te* - Your; *mama* - my; *rasaḥ* - spiritual flavour; *astu* - let there be; *rasa* - taste; *astu* - let it be; *satyaṁ* - truly.

"O Goddess! I shall never pray to You for anything else but the excellent service of Your lotus feet! I offer my constant obeisances to the idea of becoming Your friend, but I really relish the idea of becoming Your maidservant!

Explanations: The transcendental revelations do not fade away from Śrī Raghunātha dāsa. Svāminī stands before Tulasī and wants to offer her a friendly relationship, saying: "Tulasi! Please accept My friendship! You can become equal to Lalitā and the others and serve both Me and Śyāmasundara!" Tulasī then says: "O goddess! I don't want anything else but the excellent service of Your lotus feet! I offer my obeisances to Your friendship! Let it stay on my head! I only want to serve You!" No one but Dāsa Gosvāmī is so fixed in that desire for Śrī Rādhā's service! That should be our target! Such sincere eagerness cannot be found anywhere else! Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī is an eternally liberated maidservant of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī, so he is the greatest authority, the *ācārya* of the (Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava) *sampradāya* (tradition) and by following in his footsteps one will surely attain this service. He gave the

perfect example to the practising devotees with his *sādhana-maya jīvana*, his life, that was full of devotional practice. "I want to think of myself as a follower of the Gosvāmīs like Rūpa and Raghunātha dāsa. What can I do to accomplish that?" Hearing and chanting of the *mahā vāṇī* (great words) of Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī will awaken that identification as follower of Rūpa and Raghunātha. His very powerful words are even greater than the words of the Ṛṣis of yore, for these words are filled with the *līlā-rasa* of the most confidential Vraja *nikuñjas* to which even the great sages did not have access. The *kiṅkarīs* know even better how to attain Rādhārāṇī's foot-service than Rādhārāṇī Herself! The six Gosvāmīs are all eternally perfect maidservants from the groves of Vraja, therefore it is required to follow in their footsteps. Śrī Raghunātha's love can be understood through this Vilāpa. For this reason we are discussing Vilāpa Kusumāñjali.

Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī prays: "Hā devi! Please give me the excellent service of Your lotus feet!" This service is so excellent because it is completely free from shame and reverence, and it is very luscious. Such service cannot be found anywhere, but now it is given as a special token of mercy of Śrī Gaurasundara. Raghunātha dāsa is a *nitya siddha kiṅkarī* and the *guru* of the (Gauḍīya) *sampradāya*. The beautiful and sweet service of Śrī Rādhā is also most dear to us. Of all kinds of servanthood the servitude of Śrī Rādhā is the greatest. Although you are a *sakhī*, you are also a maidservant, adolescent in form and attributes, and qualified for the most intimate services. There is no other kind of servitude that can soothe the hearts of the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas. The *mañjarīs* are actually taking part in the *madhura rasa*, but still it is servitude, for their service is within the scope of the *madhura rasa– rūpa raghunātha pade hoibe ākuti; kobe hām bujhabo sei yugala prīti?* "When, will I, by following in the footsteps of Śrīla Rūpa and Śrīla Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī, understand the love of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa?" (Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura) Rūpa and Raghunātha dāsa's bodies are made from tip to toe of *yugala ujjvala rasa,* splendid consciousness of the Divine Couple. How eager their hearts were! How can one become absorbed in this splendid consciousness without being full of this *yugala ujjvala rasa*? Meditation on the Kāma *gāyatrī-mantra* is very helpful for entering into this mood. *vṛndāvane aprākṛta navīna madana; kāma bīja kāma gāyatrī yāhāra upāsana* (C.C. Madhya 8) "The transcendental youthful Cupid of Vṛndāvana (Kṛṣṇa) is meditated upon and attained by the Kāma *gāyatrī-mantra* which has the Kāma-*bīja* (seed of transcendental desire) joined to it." He who makes the devotees forget the material world and who maddens them with His transcendental form, qualities and pastimes, is the transcendental youthful Cupid, and on Him we meditate (*dhīmahi*). *gāyantaṁ trāyate yasmād iti gāyatrī*: "That which liberates by being sung is a *gāyatrī*." The worship with the Kāma-*gāyatrī-mantra* is meant to save us from material existence and to make our bodies, minds and life-airs fit for relishing the flavours of Rādhā-Govinda's transcendental pastimes.

In his spiritual absorption Śrī Raghunātha dāsa submits to Svāminī's feet: "Let me meditate how You overwhelm Śyāma with Your ecstatic plays in the *kuñjas*! When even You are unable to bring Him back to consciousness, You will need me". During His loving pastimes in the *kuñja* Śyāma faints of ecstasy because of encountering the waves of Rādhikā's vast *mādana mahā bhāva*, but Anurāgavatī (passionate Rādhikā) is not satisfied yet, so here some excellent service is required. Svāminī thinks: "Tulasi! I cannot break Priyatama's swoon! Why don't you please come?" Where else is such a confidential service to be found? Even Lalitā and Visākhā cannot attain this! This is the most excellent service! Rādhikā is called *devi* in this verse because She takes part in such playful sports.

Once the Divine Couple plays a game of dice for a wager. She who gives the most joy wins. Śyāma is defeated. On Rādhārāṇī's indication the maidservant begins to deride Śyāma, saying: "Ohe! Don't come here to play dice anymore! Better You go and herd the cows, understand? For cowherding You need a cow's brain! You must have become like them because of too much association with them! Qualifications are indispensible! Go and play there where bodily strength is required! For this game You need some brain, You understand?!

Don't come here to play this game anymore!" Śyāma is embarrassed by these joking words. There's no limit to Svāminī's ecstasy! This is the most excellent service! What a sweet *upāsanā* (subject of meditation)! How can servitude ever be supreme? When it is anointed with the *madhura rasa*! Without being in *madhura bhāva* (a sweet spiritual mood) one can not enter into Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa's pastimes. Only those who know the feelings and the thoughts of Bhāvamaya and Bhāvamayī (all-emotional Rādhikā and Kṛṣṇa-candra) can enter into this. The maidservants don't want Kṛṣṇa alone, not even in their dreams! They pray to Kṛṣṇa: "Please take me along wherever You plays Your loving pastimes - with Your Priyājī - so that I can engage in Your loving service!"[36]

Śrīmat Rūpa Gosvāmī says: The *kāma rūpa rāga bhakti* (*rāgānugā*-devotion in the erotic mood) is of two kinds: *sambhogecchātmikā* (devotion full of desire to enjoy with Kṛṣṇa personally) and *tad bhāvecchātmikā* (*sakhībhāva*): *tad bhāvecchātmikā tāsāṁ bhāva mādhurya kāmitā* (Bhakti Rasāmṛta Sindhuḥ 1.2.299). These devotees are finding more happiness in assisting Kṛṣṇa's direct lady-lovers, like Rādhā and Candrāvalī, in meeting Kṛṣṇa than in meeting Him personally. Examples are *sakhīs* like Lalitā and Viśākhā. Their *sthāyi bhāva* (intrinsic, permanent mood) is Kṛṣṇa-*rati* (love for Kṛṣṇa), and their *suhṛt rati* (love for the friend like Rādhārāṇī) is a *sañcārībhāva*, an infused mood. *sañcārayanti bhāvasya gatiṁ sañcārino'pi te* (B.R.S. 2.4.2). They love Kṛṣṇa first, and that love is infused in Rādhārāṇī. During *pūrva rāga* (beginnings of love), Śrī Rādhā met Lalitā and the *sakhīs* on the bank of the Kāliya-hrada. Because they had the same mood they became acquainted with each other that day, but when the *gopīs* saw the superiority of Śrī Rādhā's love for Kṛṣṇa they wanted to become happy by arranging for Her meeting with Kṛṣṇa. Kṛṣṇa then told His friend Subala:

kāliya damana dina māha; kālindī kūla kadambaka chāho
koto śata vraja nava bālā; pekhaluṁ janu thira vijurīka mālā
tohe kahoṁ subala sāṅgāti; taba dhari hāma nā jāno dina rāti
tahi dhanī-maṇi dui cāri; tahi mana mohinī eka nārī
so rahu majhu mone paiṭhī; manasija dhūme ghume nāhi diṭhi
anukhana tahika samādhi; ko jāne kaichana viraha veyādhi
dine dine kṣīna bhelo dehā; govinda dāsa koho aiche nava lehā

"How many hundreds of Vraja-*gopīs* didn't I see under the shade of the Kadamba-tree on the bank of the Yamunā on the day I subdued the Kāliya-snake? I tell you, O friend Subala! Then (I was so startled that) I didn't know whether it was day or night! Amongst them there were about two or four jewel-like girls, and among them there was again one particularly mind-enchanting girl. She entered My mind and the resultant smoke of Cupid did not allow me to sleep anymore. I am now constantly meditating on Her; who knows how the pain of separation feels? My body becomes skinnier and weaker every day." Govinda dāsa says: "Such are the ways of new, young love!"

Śrīmatī showed similar loving attachment when She first saw Śyāmasundara:

dekhiyā nāgara śiromani; nā jāniye divasa rajanī
ki hoilo marame vyathā; kāhāre kohibo kothā
sakhi! ki āra puchasi more; marama kohiluṁ tore
yadi se milaye moya; tabe se saphala hoy
nahile nā jīva āra; tohāre kohiluṁ sāra

"When I saw this crown-jewel of lovers I did not know anymore whether it was night or day (out of ecstasy). Who can I tell about My heartache? O *sakhi*! What more do you want

[36] Dāsa Gosvāmī himself prays like that in verse 100 of this book.

to know? I told you what's on My heart! When He will meet Me, then I will feel fulfilled, and if not then I cannot live anymore! This is definite!"

The *sakhīs* like Lalitā and Viśākhā are getting more ecstasy from establishing the meeting of the *anurāgī* eager Couple Rādhā and Mādhava than from meeting with Kṛṣṇa themselves, and in this way their love has become known as *tad-bhāvecchātmikā*-love. Still, Śrī Rādhā sometimes desires to give them the position of *nāyikā* (lady-love of Kṛṣṇa), but, although the *mañjarīs* are also a kind of *sakhī*, they never accept such a role! The *mañjarīs* (buds) enhance the beauty of a flower (*gopī*), but are never separately enjoyable to the blackbee (Kṛṣṇa). Lalitā and the *sakhīs* have *sama sneha* (equal love for Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa), but the *mañjarīs* are *rādhā snehādhikā* (they have more love for Rādhikā). This kind of love is called *bhāvollasa*. Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī states in his 'Bhakti Rasāmṛta Sindhuḥ' (2.5.128) :

sañcāri syāt samonā vā kṛṣṇa-ratyāḥ suhṛd ratiḥ
adhikā puṣyamānā ced bhāvollāsa itīryate

"When the *sakhīs* love Rādhā (*suhṛd ratiḥ*) as much as or less than Kṛṣṇa, then their *sañcārībhāva* is called Kṛṣṇa *rati*. But if they love Rādhikā more, then it is called *bhāvollāsa rati*." The *mañjarīs* are endowed with this *bhāvollāsa rati*. Śrīla Rāmāi Ṭhākura inquired from Śrīmatī Jāhnavā Ṭhākurāṇī about this *bhāvollāsa rati*:[37]

ṭhākura kohe - āge kṛpā kori koho; bhāvollāsā rati kothā āmāre śunāho
jāhnavā kohena - bāpu! śona sāvadhāne!; bhāvollāsā rati mātra hoy vṛndāvane
vṛndāvana sthāna se devera agocara; yāhā vilasaye nitya kiśorī kiśora
śrī rūpa mañjarī āra śrī rati mañjarī; sevānande magna rahe divā vibhāvarī
bhāvollāsā rati mātra ihā sabhākāra; duhu sukhe sukhī kichu nāhi jāne āra
rādhā-Kṛṣṇa sevānande sadā kāla hare; ānanda sāgare tārā sadāi vihare
śrīmatīra samā sabe deha bheda mātra; eka prāṇa eka ātmā sabhe rādhā-tantra

"Rāmāi Ṭhākura said: Please tell me more about *bhāvollāsa rati*!" Mother Jāhnavā said: "Listen carefully, O son! Bhāvollāsa *rati* can only be found in Vṛndāvana!" Vṛndāvana, where Kiśora (adolescent Kṛṣṇa) eternally sports with Kiśorī (adolescent Rādhikā) cannot be perceived even by the *devas*. Śrī Rūpa Mañjarī and Śrī Rati Mañjarī are absorbed in the ecstasy of devotional service day and night. They are all endowed with *bhāvollāsā rati*, and they are happy only when the Divine Couple is happy; they don't know anything else but that. They are completely equal to Śrīmatī; only their bodies are different. They are one soul and one life-air and they are all controlled by Rādhā."

One who wants to relish Kṛṣṇa's sweetness to the utmost must take complete shelter of Śrī Rādhā. Śrīpāda Prabodhānanda Sarasvatī writes in Rādhā Rasa Sudhānidhiḥ (261): *kvāsau rādhā nigama padavī dūragā kutra cāsau Kṛṣṇas tasyāḥ kuca mukulayor antaraikānta vāsaḥ* "Where is Rādhā, who is hard to perceive by following the Vedas, and where is Kṛṣṇa, who always lives inbetween Her bud-like breasts?" Śrī Rādhārāṇī says: "If you want to see My Sundara (beautiful Kṛṣṇa) you must take full shelter of My lotus feet!" And why do the *mañjarīs* love Kṛṣṇa? Because He is Rādhārāṇī's gallant! "Remember Kṛṣṇa in this Vraja forest as the Prāṇa-vallabha of my Svāminī! First Rādhā - then Śyāma! When Kṛṣṇa makes any trouble we'll take Him by the hand and throw Him out of the *kuñja*! We are the maidservants of Rādhā!" Why do the *kiṅkarīs* love Kṛṣṇa? Because He is the lover of Rādhārāṇī!

Once, when Kṛṣṇa takes His supper in Nandīśvara, a *kiṅkarī* fans Him. Without being seen by others Śyāma keeps His hand on that *kiṅkarī*'s foot, as a means of asking her: "Will I meet My Dearest One or not?" That maidservant then places one toe on Śyāma's hand,

[37] The entire explanation of this verse so far is given by Śrī Ānanda Gopāla Gosvāmī.

indicating that a meeting will be possible - that is the most excellent service! This is *vara dāsya*, the most excellent service! Nothing is done for personal happiness, everything is done for the pleasure of the Yugala! Although the *mañjarīs* are in the category of *sakhīs* they are servants because of their complete dedication to devotional service. The *sakhīs* may have a superior position in the pastimes, but the fortune of service is greater for the *mañjarīs*! They know Śrī Rādhikā's innermost purpose and therefore they can perform their service without hesitation like no one else in the world.

One day Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa are intimately enjoying Themselves in a *kuñja*, and a *mañjarī* relishes the sweetness of these pastimes through a passage between the vines. It appears to the maidservant that there is some obstacle in Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa's pastimes, but They don't notice anything out of ecstasy. The maidservant then notices that Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa got stuck to Each other with Their hair, so very carefully she enters the *kuñja*, so as not to disturb Them, and unravels the hairs, so that the amorous pastimes can continue again. Who else can perform such a clever, intimate service? Even Lalitā and the *sakhīs* don't know! This is *vara dāsya,* the most excellent service, which is attained by chanting the name of Śrī Rādhā: *jaya jaya rādhā nāma, vṛndāvana yāra dhāma, kṛṣṇa sukha vilāsera nidhi* (Narottama Dāsa Ṭhākura, Prema Bhakti Candrikā) "Glory, glory to Śrī Rādhā's name, that dwells in Vrndāvana and that is the jewel of Śrī Kṛṣṇa's blissful pastimes!"

"O Rādhe! For attaining Your most excellent service I'm taking shelter of Your lotus feet, that even Śyāma holds to His chest for soothing His lust-afflicted heart!

vṛndāvaneśvari tavaiva padāravindaṁ premāmṛtaika makaranda rasaugha pūrṇam
hṛdy arpitam madhupateḥ smara tāpam ugraṁ nirvāpayat parama śītalam āśrayāmi

"O Queen of Vṛndāvana! I take shelter of Your cooling lotus feet, that are filled with all the nectar- honey of pure love, and that even Madhupati, the Lord of sweetness Śrī Kṛṣṇa, keeps to His heart to soothe His terrible lusty affliction!" (Rādhā Rasa Sudhānidhiḥ - 13)

Śrī Rādhikā protects Śrī Kṛṣṇa's senses, that's why She is a **GOPĪ** (the verbal root '*gup*' means 'protecting'). Giridhārī does not feel the slightest distress while lifting Govardhana Hill. His pleasure potency stands before Him and solves everything. She's made of the quintessence of the Cintāmaṇi jewel of *mahā-bhāva*, the pinnacle of love. In sandalwoodpulp or a Cintāmaṇī-stone there is no *asāra*, or useless refuse, but still Her *mahā-bhāva* is the *sāra*, or quintessence, of the Cintāmani-jewel of *prema*. The maidservants say: "Śyāma! Do You know why You're so beautiful? Because Your Priyā is here!" [38]

rādhā saṅge yadā bhāti tadā madana mohanaḥ
anyathā viśvamoho'pi svayaṁ madana mohitaḥ

(Govinda Līlāmṛta 8.32)

"When He shines with Rādhā, He is Madana Mohana, the enchanter of Cupid, but otherwise He is Himself enchanted by Cupid, although He enchants the whole world!"

coḍi gopīra manoratha, manmathera mana mathe, nāma dhare madana mohana

"Mounting the chariots of the *gopīs*' desires, He stirs even Cupid's mind, hence He is called Madana Mohana." (Caitanya Caritāmṛta) *ballabī bhuja-latā baddhe manobhāvati brahmani mano me ramate* "The supreme *brahman* delights my mind when it is bound by the vine-like

[38] The 4 paragraphs from "one who wants to relish Kṛṣṇa's sweetness" until here are explained by Śrī Ānanda Gopāla Gosvāmī.

arms of the cowherd girls." Kṛṣṇa is very happy when someone calls Him Rādhā-sevaka (the servant of Rādhā), but almost nobody says this. Śrī Kṛṣṇa is so much under Rādhā's control that He is willing to give everything to those who serve Her. Śrīla Prabodhānanda Sarasvatī writes (Rādhā Rasa Sudhānidhih 155):

anulikhyānantān api sad aparādhan madhupatir
mahā premāviṣṭas tava parama deyaṁ vimṛśyati
tavaikaṁ śrī rādhe gṛṇata iha nāmāmṛta rasaṁ
mahimnaḥ kaḥ sīmaṁ spṛśatu dāsyaika manasām

"O Śrī Rādhe! Madhupati (Kṛṣṇa) cancels innumerable offenses of anyone who even once relishes the nectarean spiritual flavour of Your name, and in great ecstasy He considers what is the greatest gift He can give to such a person. Who can then imagine the glories of someone whose mind is fixed on becoming Your maidservant?"

Śrīla Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī says: "I don't want anything else but Your excellent service! If I am not qualifed for Your service, then please at least make me attached to this aspiration, so that one day I may get it." *dāsyāya te mama raso'stu raso'stu satyaṁ*: "Let me truly have eager spiritual thirst for Your service!"[39]
Śrī Rasika-Candra Dāsa sings:

tomāra caraṇa padma, prema bhakti rasa sadma
dāsī bhāve sevā vinā tāra
jīvane maraṇe hāya, mone mora nāhi cāya,
sakhītvādi anya kichu āra

"Your lotus feet are the abode of loving devotion. In life or in death, I don't want anything else but a service-mood towards them! I don't want friendship with You or anything else!"

nā jāni sakhyera guṇa, tāi devi punaḥ punaḥ
tava sakhye mora namaskāra
yadi bolo lajjā pāi, sakhītvere nāhi cāi,
kintu mone vāsanā tāhāra.
śuno devi nivedana, se lālasā kadācana,
nāhi uṭhe āmāra hṛdaya
tava dāsya rase mora, sadā mone rahu bhora
ei satya jānibe niścoy

"I don't know the qualities of friendship, therefore, O Devi, I offer my obeisances to it again and again! And if You say: "You don't want My friendship just because You're shy, but you actually desire it within your mind!", then listen, O Devi, to my petition: "This desire has never arisen in my heart! My mind is always filled with *dāsya rasa*, that You should know for sure!"

.

VERSE 17:

ATI SULALITA LĀKṢĀŚLIṢṬA SAUBHĀGYA MUDRĀ

[39] Entire explanation by Śrī Ānanda Gopāla Gosvāmī.

TATIBHIR ADHIKA TUṢṬYĀ CIHNATĪ KṚTYA BĀHŪ
NAKHA DALITA HARIDRĀ GARVAGAURĪ PRIYAṀ ME
CARAṆA-KAMALA SEVĀṀ HĀ KADĀ DĀSYASI TVAM

ati - very; *sulalita* - charming; *lākṣā* - red footlac; *śliṣṭa* - anointed with; *saubhāgya* - of fortune; *mudrā* - signs; *tatibhiḥ* - by a multitude of; *adhika* - more; *tuṣṭyā* - by satisfaction; *cihnatī* - marking; *kṛtya* - doing; *bāhū* - arms; *nakha* - nails; *dalita* - scratched; *haridrā* - turmeric; *garva* - pride; *gauri* - golden; *priyaṁ* - dear; *me* - unto me; *caraṇa* - feet; *kamala* - lotus; *sevāṁ* - service; *hā* - alas!; *kadā* - when; *dāsyasi* - will give; *tvam* - You.

O You whose golden hue possesses the pride of the color of a turmeric-bulb scratched by a fingernail! When will You, having, out of great satisfaction, marked my arms with Your emblems of good fortune that are anointed with Your very lovely footlac, bestow the service of Your lotus feet on me?

Explanations: Śrīmatī Rādhikā is very satisfied with Śrī Raghunātha dāsa's limitlessly eager prayer for devotional service in the last verse. Śrī Raghunātha dāsa laments: "I don't wish to be acquainted with anyone who is not related with You in this world! Let the whole world know that I have nobody else but You! Everyone will understand that Tulasī is Śrī Rādhikā's maidservant!" The eternal spiritual absorption of Śrī Raghunātha dāsa is unadulterated: *tanu vān manobhir aham tavāsmi* "I am Yours with body, mind and words! I'm not just Your quiet, hidden maidservant! I want to be Your marked maidservant!" This firm loyalty swallows the whole ego. Even in so-called 'external consciousness' the twanging of the *siddha svarūpa* is audible, even then the devotee covets the service of Śrī Rādhā. He is not even satisfied with dreams, *smaraṇa* or visions - he wants the real thing! Even in external consciousness Raghunātha dāsa strongly feels the absence of Svāminī, so he rolls on the bank of Rādhākuṇḍa and weeps:

avīkṣyātmeśvarīṁ kācid vṛndāvana maheśvarīm
tat padāmbhoja mātraika gatir dāsy ati kātarā
patitā tad saras tīre rudaty ārta ravākulam
tac chrīvaktrekṣaṇāvāptyai nāmāny etāni saṁjagau

"Not seeing her goddess, the Queen of Vṛndāvana, a certain maidservant, who considers Her lotus feet the only goal of Her life became very anxious, fell down at the shore of Her lake (Rādhākuṇḍa), cried loudly out of pain, and, just to see Her beautiful face, sang the following names:" Śrī Raghunātha weeps and prays: "Please draw me to Your lotus feet, calling me Your maidservant! I won't be a quiet maidservant! I will be Your marked maidservant!" Just as his feelings of separation make his life-airs reach his throat he attains the vision of a divine pastime: Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa sweetly enjoy Themselves in a *kuñja* on the bank of Rādhākuṇḍa and Tulasī watches it through an opening in the wall of vines. After the love-play is finished, the surrendered maidservants enter into the *kuñja*. Śrī Rādhikā takes the role of *svādhīna bhartṛkā* (independent lady-love), who controls Her lover.[40] She lies down and

[40] *svāyattāsanna dayitā bhavet svādhīna bhartṛkā* (Ujjvala Nīlamaṇi) "A girl whose lover always stands by her in a subdued fashion is called an independent lady-love or *svādhīna bhartṛkā*.

the submissive hero sits at Her feet, desiring to paint red lac on them singlehandedly. Unless He has a submissive attitude He cannot serve, hence He sits close to Svāminī's feet, wanting to anoint them with lac-dye. Tulasī holds the brush and a cup with lac in her hands. As tears of love stream from His eyes, our hero begins to paint Svāminī's footsoles, thinking: "I'm not so fortunate as this footlac, that I can stick to Her feet the whole day! Everyone says that I am nondifferent from My name, so let My name stay on Her foot-soles then!" He then begins to write His name on the sides of Svāminī's feet and becomes overwhelmed by the beauty of His own name written in red lac, thinking: "Alas! Even My name is more fortunate than Me!" Śrīla Prabodhānanda Sarasvatī writes:

rasaghana mohana mūrtiṁ vicitra keli mahotsavollāsitam
rādhā caraṇa viloḍhita rucira śikhaṇḍaṁ hariṁ vande

"I praise Śrī Hari, who is the embodiment of profoundly enchanting spiritual flavour, who is gladdened by a wonderful great festival of play and whose head, that is decorated with a beautiful peacock feather, rolls at Śrī Rādhā's feet!" (Rādhā Rasa Sudhānidhih - 201)

Tulasī enjoys to see Śrī Hari's zeal in decorating her Svāminī and she giggles, covering her mouth with her veil. Seeing Tulasī giggling, Svāminī says: "What's going on?", and kicks Tulasī for punishment on the arms with Her foot, that has the wet lac still on it. Fortunate Tulasī thus has the auspicious signs (like the flag, thunderbolt, barleycorn, chariot, conchshells etc.) of Svāminī's footsoles printed on her shoulders through the footlac. Svāminī does not kick everyone like this: It is a sign of intimacy! With these auspicious signs Tulasī proudly goes from *kuñja* to *kuñja*. "Let everyone see that I'm Śrī Rādhā's marked maidservant!" Then suddenly the revelation vanishes and Śrī Raghunātha dāsa cries: "Hā Rādhe! When will You print these auspicious marks on my shoulders?"

prema is mixed with this footlac, therefore Śrī Raghunātha dāsa uses the words *ati sulalita lāksā*: it is very charming because of the love it contains. "Not when it is applied by us maidservants, but when it is applied by Your lover! Will the hearts of us maidservants be pleased if He is not submissive to You? He, who feels Himself blessed when He even once catches the breeze coming from Your flapping veil?" *yasyāḥ kadāpi vasanāñcala khelanottha dhanyāti dhanya pavanena kṛtārtha mānī* (Rādhā Rasa Sudhānidhi - 2) We want Śrī Rādhā's superiority, but that does not make Śyāma inferior, rather it brings His superiority to the limit![41] When Bilvamaṅgala describes the beauty of Kṛṣṇa's eyes (in Kṛṣṇa Karnāmṛtam, 13), he says: *pratipada lalitābhyāṁ pratyahaṁ nūtanābhyāṁ* "Kṛṣṇa's eyes have aquired fullness through love, they became the abode of beauty, they are charming at every step and they are novel every day". Śrī Kṛṣṇa Dāsa Kavirāja writes in his Sāraṅga Raṅgada-commentary on this verse that Kṛṣṇa's eyes are so beautiful because they taste the *rasa* of Śrī Rādhā's love for Him. Śrī Kṛṣṇa says in Caitanya Caritāmṛta:

yadyapi nirmala rādhāra satprema darpaṇa; tathāpi svacchatā tāra bāḍhe kṣaṇe kṣaṇa
āmāra mādhurya nāhi bāḍhite avakāśe; e darpaṇera āge nava nava rūpe bhāse

"Although the mirror of Rādhā's true love is completely clear its clarity still increases at every moment. There is also no cessation to the increase of My sweetness, which shines in ever-new forms in front of this mirror."

"I want to see Your submissive lover anointed with the lac-dye of Your footsoles." Bhīṣmadeva, an *aiśvarya upāsaka* (who meditates on Kṛṣṇa in His divine prowess) was able, by the blessing of his father, to choose the time of his own death, and he waited until he could see Kṛṣṇa in His *vīra rasa* (heroic mood) before he died. He says in Śrīmad Bhāgavata (1.9.34):

[41] Upto here the entire explanation is by Śrī Ānanda Gopāla Gosvāmī.

yudhi turaga rajo vidhūmra viṣvak kaca lulita śrama vāry ālaṅkṛtāsye
mama niśita śarair vibhidyamāna tvaci vilasat kavace'stu Kṛṣṇa ātmā

"May my mind be fixed on Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Self, whose hair was flowing as it was greyed by the dust thrown up by the hooves of the horses during the battle, whose face was adorned by sweatdrops, and who enjoyed being pierced by my sharp arrows!" In the same way the *mañjarīs* want to meditate on Śrī Rādhikā in a particular way! They always desire to see the most enchanting Couple moistened with sweatdrops of exhaustion of Their erotic battle, Their dresses and ornaments loosened. The perfection of the eyes is to see the subdued hero and the independent heroine whose lustre defeats the pride of golden-colored turmeric. Tulasī says: "Please mark me with the footlac which was applied to Your footsoles by Your dedicated and submissive hero!" Śrī Raghunātha shows great longing for devotional service. *caraṇa kamala sevāṁ hā kadā dāsyasi tvam* "O! When will You give me the devotional service of Your lotus feet?" Devotion means service. *bhaj ityeṣa vai dhātuḥ sevāyāṁ parikīrtitaḥ*. Devotional service is everything for a loving devotee. The pleasure of the *sevya* (the worshipped) is the target of such service, not one's personal pleasure. *ānukūlyena kṛṣṇānuśilanaṁ bhaktir uttamā* (Bhakti Rasāmṛta Sindhuḥ 1.1.11) "The highest devotion is that devotion which is favorable to Kṛṣṇa". Śrī Jīva Gosvāmī writes the following commentary on this verse: *ānukūlyam cāsminn uddeśyāya śrī kṛṣṇāya rocamānāḥ pravṛttiḥ* "Favorable means something that is pleasing to Kṛṣṇa." "It is prescribed by the scriptures, and that's why I'm doing it, but I have no idea if my beloved deity enjoys it or not". This is not the way of *rāgānugā bhakti*. When the beloved deity responds within my heart, saying: "I am enjoying and relishing your devotional service", then I will know that my service is a success![42] In the book Bhaktamāl[43] it is described that Śrī Baṅki Bihārijī[44] passed over Haridāsa Svāmī's *rāja bhoga* (luxurious noon-time offering) in favor of the simple fried chickpeas that were offered by Jagannāthī Mādhava. It's also known (from Caitanya Caritāmṛta) that Sākṣī Gopāla asked the Queen of Orissa to place a pearl in His nose. This is not the worship of the indifferent - it is the worship of lovers. This religion of love is completely devoid of any kind of deceit. *dharmaḥ projjhita kaitavaḥ* (S.B.1.1.2). Love makes one forget bodily happiness. The loving worshipper does not desire sensual, physical or even spiritual pleasures, for all kinds of personal pleasure is cheating, but this is not so easy to give up. Therefore Śrīla Premānanda Ṭhākura has said in his Manaḥ Śikṣā (90):

ore mana! e tora bujhibāra bhula!
kohicho vedera pāra, koricho niṣiddhācāra,
bhāva dekhi āpanāra mūla

"O mind! You just don't understand! You say that you are beyond the Vedic regulations, but you perform forbidden activities! When I see this I see your very essence."

muktike aiśvarya boli, dūrete diyācho pheli,
iṅgite bujhāo ei tattva.
anitya asāra artha, se bhālo sadāi prārthya,
yā lāgi rajanī divā matta.

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[42] From "I want to see..." down to here the explanation is by Śrī Ānanda Gopāla Gosvāmī.

[43] Written by Nābhā dāsa.

[44] The most popular deity in Vṛndāvana for Hindu pilgrims, even now.

"You call liberation a luxurious distraction and have thrown it far away. Give me a hint so that I can understand this truth. Fleeting, useless riches are always desirable and you are going mad thinking about it day and night."

nirhetu yājana koro, hetu se chāḍite nāro,
kathāya virakta e saṁsāra
sarvasva bolicho yāra, dite eka baṭa tāra,
se cāhile koho āpanāra.

"You outwardly perform rituals without desire for gain, but you are not able to free yourself from the same. In your speech you are detached from the material world. Who you call 'my everything' is the same everything you give only a tiny Banyan-leaf to. And you think that it is yours to give!"

koho bhaji vṛndāvana, ghare sukhavāsa mana,
bhālobāso vasaṇa bhūṣaṇe
santuṣṭa mānicho māne, mahākrodhe apamāne,
ātma-sukha ghucilo kemone?

"You say 'I worship Vṛndāvana', but you're happily staying at home - you love all exterior trappings. You're satisfied with praise, but are enraged when insulted. How did you manage to destroy the happiness of your soul?"

kohicho gopīra dharma, ki bujhicho tāra marma,
svabhāva chāḍite nāro tile.
dekhiyā pāicho sukha, prakṛti bāghinī mukha,
sarvātmā sahite yei gile.

"You say that you follow the *gopīs* but what do you understand about the meaning of that? You can't let go of your nature one iota. You get pleasure seeing the face of material nature (or women), who swallows you whole."

kohe śuno premānanda, vicārile sab dhandha,
kohile śunile kibā hoy.
hari hari avirata, koho ei prema patha,
nirmala hoibe suniścaya.

"Listen", says Premānanda, "if you think about it, it's all a ball of confusion. What's to be gained by listening or flapping your mouth? Always chant 'Hari, Hari' while you traverse the path of love, and you will surely be cleansed of all impurities!"

The pure devotee bathes in his tears of love when he chants the holy name and the beloved deity stays close by to relish this. What an incomparable service! *bhaktera prema ceṣṭā dekhi kṛṣṇera camatkāra* (C.C.) "Even Kṛṣṇa is astonished when He sees the loving activities of His devotees!" "With my eyes I will see Your form and with my ears I will hear Your flute!" "I am unworthy, I will never get to see Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa!" - devotional greed will never allow such despair to come. The beauty of the path of sacred passion is that it makes one transcend the considerations of worthiness or unworthiness.[45] The loving devotee will think: "If You don't respond then who will lift me up? If I could just slightly dedicate my life to Your service - then

[45] *nāpi lobhanīya vastu prāptau svasya yogyāyogyatva vicāraḥ ko'pyudbhavati* (Rāga Vartma Candrikā, Viśvanātha Cakravartī)

I would be blessed! She will make me understand what is favorable and what is unfavorable!" When the loving devotee has been separated from his beloved deity for a long time, yearning for His *darśana,* he starts thinking: "Maybe the Lord is just not pleased with me!" The Gosvāmīs taught the world by example. One day Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī thought: "I could not get Vṛndāvaneśvarī's (Rādhikā's) mercy, then what is the use of my body?" He closed the door of his cottage and sat down, but at twilight time someone called him, saying: "Bābā! Open the door, I have come!" Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī had personally come to His door with a pitcher of milk on Her head, dressed like a cowherd girl. Śrī Rūpa knew the girl, he begged food from her parents' house sometimes, but she looked so extraordinary sweet this time! The girl said: "Bābā! Why didn't you come to our house today for *mādhukarī* (collecting alms)?" Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī said: "Lālī (little girl)! I'm not coming anymore!" The girl said: "Why, what happened?" Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī said: "If my beloved Goddess does not bestow Her mercy upon me, then what's the use of maintaining this body still?" The girl said: "Who said you that don't get the mercy? It is Her mercy that you can live here in Vṛndāvana! Drink some milk and come for *mādhukarī* again from tomorrow! Only if you remain in physical health you can do *bhajan*, after all!" After saying this, the girl left. Śrī Rūpa was enchanted by Her charming movements and thought: "Who is this amazing girl?" Meanwhile, by Rādhārāṇī's arrangement Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī came by to find out how Rūpa Gosvāmī (who was his disciple)'s *bhajan* was going. Śrī Rūpa had already planned to offer some milk to Śrī Sanātana prabhu, so he offered him the milk which was handed to him by the wonderful cowherd girl, but when Sanātana Gosvāmī simply smelled the fragrance of the milk he fainted of ecstatic love. Later, when he heard from Rūpa Gosvāmī where the milk came from, Sanātana told him: "Rūpa! She (Śrīmatī Rādhikā) is the embodiment of great compassion! Will you make Her toil like this?" Śrī Rūpa understood Sanātana Gosvāmī's purport and resumed his practice of *mādhukarī*.

Śrīla Raghunātha Dāsa says: "I will not request You for these blessed marks, You will spontaneously print them on me, being satisfied with my service! You will say: "Tulasi! Come! I need you!" Your kicks with the foot are a sign that You are satisfied with me. You don't just kick everyone like that!" How intense is this feeling of possessiveness! (When Śrī Rādhikā says): "You are Mine!", that will be concealed by (the *kiṅkarī* saying): "I am Yours!" The maidservant is exclusively surrendered to her Svāminī, like a flower that was never even smelt by any honeybee! Prāṇeśvarī gives the service of Her lotus feet by saying: 'Tulasi, come! My necklace is broken, restring it! My *tilaka* has faded away, put it back on!', and so on! *ājñāya koribo sevā caraṇāravinda* (being ordered, I will serve Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa's lotus feet, Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura) Śrī Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī prays: "Take me as Your marked maidservant! I want to serve Your lotus feet!" How eager he is to serve the embodiment of ecstatic love! Suddenly he gets a vision of wonderful gradual services, that will commence from the next verse.[46]
Śrī Rasika-Candra Dāsa sings:

nakha vidalita mari, he haridrā garva gauri,
tava pada kamala yugale
ki sundara śobhā pāya, alaktaka rāga tāya,
yāvādika cihna jholamole

"O You whose golden lustre steals the pride of turmeric scratched by the nails! How beautiful Your lotus feet are with their shining reddish footlac!"

se saubhāgya cihne kobe, bāhu sucihnita hobe,
pāda padma sevibo yokhon
kātare tomāra pāya, dāsī ei bhikṣā cāi,

[46] From 'the pure devotee' down to here the explanation is by Śrī Ānanda Gopāla Gosvāmī.

abhilāṣa koroho pūraṇa

"When will You print the auspicious marks of Your footsoles on My arm, making it nicely marked while I serve Your lotus feet? This maidservant anxiously prays at Your feet: 'Please fulfil my desire!"

caraṇa kamala sevā, sei dhana more dibā,
se ye mora prāṇa adhikāi
nāhi more upekṣibā, sei sevā kobe dibā
tāhā vinu ān nāhi cāi

"When will You give me the treasure of the service of Your lotus feet, that is dearer to me than my life? Don't let me down! When will You give me that service? I do not want anything else!"

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VERSE 18:

PRAṆĀLĪṀ KĪLĀLAIR BAHUBHIR ABHISAṄKṢĀLYA MADHURAIR
MUDĀ SAṀMĀRJA SVAIR VIVṚTA KACAVṚṆDAIḤ PRIYATAYĀ
KADĀ BĀHYĀGĀRAṀ VARA PARIMALAIR DHŪPA NIVAHAIḤ
VIDHĀSYE TE DEVI PRATI-DINAM AHO VĀSITAM AHAṀ

praṇālīṁ - the drain; *kīlālaiḥ* - with water; *bahubhiḥ* - with an abundance of; *abhisaṁkṣālya* - completely rinsing; - with sweet; *mudā* - blissfully; *saṁmārja* - rubbed; *svaiḥ* - with the own; *vivṛta* - opened; *kaca-vṛndaiḥ* - with the hairs; *priyatayā* - considering it very dear; *kadā* - when; *bāhyāgāraṁ* - latrine; *vara* - excellent; *parimalaiḥ* - with scents; *dhūpa* - incense; *nivahaiḥ* - with an abundance; *vidhāsye* - I will do; *te* - Your; *devi* - O Goddess!; *prati* - each; *dinam* - day; *aho* - O!; *vāsitam* -scented; *aham* - I.

O my Goddess! When may I, after joyfully rinsing Your drain with sweetly scented water and lovingly sweeping it with my loosened hair, considering it very dear, daily make Your latrine fragrant with nice incenses?

Explanations: Prayer unlocks the shackles of the Lord's mercy. In the previous verse Śrī Raghunātha dāsa had a vision of a very sweet pastime in his *svarūpāveśa*. Svāminī had made Tulasī Mañjarī her marked maidservant with the fresh lac-dye-anointed signs of fortune that adorn Her lotus feet, and when that vision vanishes Raghunātha considers his life to be useless. In this way Svāminī plays hide-and-seek with Her maidservants, sometimes disappearing from them and sometimes re-appearing. It is like a succession of the illumination and shade of transcendental happiness and distress, which is the current of life for a loving devotee. *śuddha prema sukha sindhu, pāi tāra eka bindu, sei bindu jagata ḍubāya* (C.C.) "Even one drop from the blissful ocean of pure love inundates the world." Although Śrī Rāghunātha always swims in that blissful ocean he is still always lamenting out of divine love. Śrī Rādhā is the embodiment

of complete love, but still the devotee feels so much pain while constantly attaining Her in dreams, *smaraṇa* and visions! This is the speciality of Vraja-*prema*. Remembering this *prema* a poet has said: *boḍo vedanāra moto bejecho he, tumi āmāra prāṇe*! "You annnounced it to me in a very painful way, but You are my very life!" Still, this agony is a special kind of transcendental bliss, therefore the *ācāryas* have classified it as a *rasa*. Those who wander in the kingdom of ecstatic love know the purport of that. When the vision vanishes Raghunātha becomes very anxious: *udvege divasa nā yāya, kṣaṇa hoilo yuga-sama, varṣāra megha prāya aśru variṣe nayana* (C.C.) "Of anxiety the day will not pass. A moment appears to be an age, and tears are flowing from my eyes like rain showered from a monsoon cloud." Such is the condition of Śrī Raghunātha dāsa; without the personal service of Śrīmatī he considers the world to be empty, and therefore he weeps and laments in great agony. His heart pines from the *kaiṅkarya rasa* (flavour of service) of Śrī Rādhā.

Suddenly a sweet vision comes to Śrī Raghunātha: He sees himself on the terrace of Śrī Rādhā's house in Her abode Yāvaṭa, in his spiritual form of Tulasī Mañjarī. It is morningtime, but Śrīmatī is still sleeping in Her bedroom, exhausted of Her amorous nocturnal pastimes with Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Śrīmatī Rūpa Mañjarī mercifully gives Tulasī a menial service to begin with. Devotional service is everything, starting from the most menial services. It is summertime and Tulasī begins to flush Śrīmatī's latrine with a lot of cold water, letting it run off through the drain. Then she opens her braid and rubs the latrine clean with her opened hair, thinking: "Why should I only clean this place with my opened hair? It would be better if I rubbed it with my very life!" It is Prāṇeśvarī's latrine, so this service is also as dear as life to the devotees. The fortunate *sādhakas* always relish the flavours of this remembrance. This is the means and the goal at the same time. The *mahājanas* say:

sādhana ekhāne, siddhi-o ekhāne,
bhāvera gocara se,
ekhāne tā yadi, dekhite nā pāo,
marile dekhibe ke

"*sādhana* (practice) is here (in this world) and *siddhi* (perfection) is here, and it is perceivable at the stage of *bhāva.* If you don't see Kṛṣṇa here (due to a lack of *bhāva*), then how will you see Him when you die?" The mind of a devotee who is fixed in *smaraṇa* goes to the kingdom of *līlās* and relishes the pastimes so vividly there as if they are directly perceived. *siddha deha cinti kore tāhāi sevana; sakhībhāve pāy rādhā-kṛṣṇera caraṇa* (C.C.) "Think of your devotional service in your *siddha-deha* (spiritual body), thus you will attain Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa's lotus feet in the mood of the *sakhīs*." The *mahājanas* say that each and every soul is eligible for the service of Śrī Rādhā, and by the power of associating with these *mahājanas* pure God-consciousness spontaneously manifests itself in the pure spirit soul. *sei gopī bhāvāmṛta yāra lobha hoy* (C.C.) "Anyone who becomes greedy for that nectarean mood of the *gopīs*..." These people are the fortunate souls who have obtained the grace of like-minded great *rasika* devotees. The fullest manifestation of devotion is *gopī-bhāva*, for the *gopīs* are exclusively dedicated to the pleasure of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. This *gopī-bhāva* is the treasure of the practice of the pure swan-like devotees, and the culmination of this *sakhī-bhāva* is *mañjarī-bhāva*. By following in the footsteps of the eternally perfect devotees, that belong to the Lord's internal potency, one can attain the confidential *nikuñja-sevā* of Śrī Rādhā and Mādhava.

In his *svarūpāveśa* Śrī Raghunātha, as Tulasī, is now most blissfully engaged in rinsing and sweeping the drain of Śrīmatī's latrine with her opened braid. How intense is her feeling of mineness! "It is the latrine of my mistress, and it is dearer to me than millions of lives! I have to sweep it with my own hair, with what else? If I could sweep it with my own life-airs then it would be even better!" How much this maidservant is the object of Svāminī's mercy! She performs such menial service with her own hairs!

Śrī Lokanātha Gosvāmī had vowed not to give *mantra*-initiation to anyone, but by performing the menial service of daily cleaning up his stool after he used the toilet, with great love, Śrīla Narottama Dāsa Ṭhākura obtained his mercy. All the people know how Lokanātha Gosvāmī had to make his firm vow float away on the stream of Śrīla Narottama's sincere, menial service in this way. Similarly, the maidservant is the object of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī's mercy, as she scents Her latrine with *aguru*-incense and so, being similarly surrendered and sincere. Just as Tulasī takes the incense in her hand everything vanishes and Raghunātha dāsa anxiously prays for this service:

sumadhura jala rāśī koriyā siñcana; snānāgāra praṇālikā kori prakṣālana
priya jñāne mora ei keśera kalāpe; sammārjita koribo ye ei praṇālike
jvāliyā sugandhi dhūpa hari guṇa gāne; suvāsita koribo go se bāhya bhavane
prati dina ei sevā koriyā niyama; kobe vā koribo āmi kori nivedana
dāsa gosvāmīra e prārthanā madhura rasāla; prātaḥ kāle haripada cinta cirakāla

"I sprinkle and rinse the drain of the bathroom with sweet water and sweep this drain with my own opened braid, since it is very dear to me. I will scent the latrine with burning fragrant incense while singing Hari's glories. When can I do this service, as a rule, every day? This is my humble prayer! Śrī Haripada Śīla always thinks of these sweet and delectable prayers of Dāsa Gosvāmī in the morning."

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VERSE 19:

PRĀTAḤ SUDHĀṀŚU MILITĀṀ MṚDAM ATRA YATNĀD
ĀHṚTYA VĀSITA PAYAŚ CA GṚHĀNTARE CA
PĀDĀMBUJE TAVA KADĀ JALADHĀRAYĀ TE
PRAKṢĀLYA BHĀVINI KACAIR IHA MĀRJAYĀMI

prātaḥ - in the morning; *sudhāṁśu* - camphor; *militaṁ* - mixed with; *mṛdam* - with clay; *atra* - here; *yatnāt* - carefully; *āhṛtya* - taking away; *vāsita* - scented; *payaḥ* - water; *ca* - and; *gṛha* - house; *antare* - inside; *ca* - and; *pāda* - feet; *ambuje* - in the lotus; *tava* - Your; *kadā* - when; *jala* - water; *dhārayā* - with a stream; *te* - Your; *prakṣālya* - having washed; *bhāvini* - O beautiful or emotional girl; *kacaiḥ* - with the hairs; *iha* - at a place proper for washing the feet; *mārjayāmi* - I wash.

O Bhāvini (beautiful or emotional girl)! When can I diligently bring clay mixed with camphor along with scented water into Your room, wash Your lotuslike feet with a stream of this water in a place suitable for washing Your lotus feet, and dry them with my hair?

Explanations: The service of Śrī Rādhārāṇī is not like the service of the Supreme Personality of Godhead; it is the service of ecstatic love personified! In his Premāmbhoja Maranda Stavarāja Śrī Raghunātha dāsa has written: *mahābhāvojjvala cintā-ratnodbhāvita*

vigrahām–"Her form is born from the glistening thought-gem of *mahā bhāva*." *mahābhāva cintāmaṇi rādhāra svarūpa* (C.C.) Where are the insignificant living entities, and where is that *mahā bhāva*?

hlādinīra sāra aṁśa - tāra prema nāma; ānanda cinmaya rasa - premera ākhyāna
premera parama sāra - mahā bhāva jāni; sei mahā bhāva rūpā rādhā ṭhākurāṇī {C.C.}

"The essential portion of the Lord's pleasure potency is named *prema* (love of God) and that *prema* is known to consist of blissful transcendental flavours. The quintessence of *prema* is *mahā bhāva* and the personification of that *mahā bhāva* is the goddess Rādhā." Therefore, for engaging in the service of Śrī Rādhā one must adopt a favorable mood.

In the previous verse Śrī Raghunātha attained his desired devotional service, but when that vision vanishes the agony of separation becomes intolerable. Weeping and weeping he prays: "Ayi Bhāvini! (beautiful or emotional girl)! When can I diligently bring soft clay mixed with camphor along with scented water into Your room, wash Your lotuslike feet with a stream of this water and wipe them with my hair?" What is the meaning of the address Bhāvinī? The address is made in a spiritual vision. Svāminī is all-emotional, and so are Her maidservants! Svāminī is ecstatic about Her lover and the maidservants ecstatically love Svāminī! This cannot be experienced with a scattered mind. It is necessary, therefore, to bring Her mood into the heart. Something will be understood when the conditions become even slightly favorable and some help is given. How wonderful is the Gosvāmīs' loyalty to the lotus feet of Śrī Rādhā! Śrīmad Prabodhānanda Sarasvati has written in Rādhā Rasa Sudhānidhi (78): *yā vṛndāvana sīmni kācana ghanāścarya kiśorī maṇis tat kaiṅkarya rasāmṛtād iha paraṁ citte na me rocate* "Nothing else can please my mind than the nectar-*rasa* of the maidservanthood of some most amazing jewel of adolescent girls from the outskirts of Vṛndāvana!" It is natural that nothing then pleases the mind anymore, because *rāgānugā bhakti* is a 'mental religion', as Śrī Viśvanātha Cakravartī says in Rāga Vartma Candrikā (*rāgasya manodharmatvāt*). There is no necessity of scriptural injunctions, for *lobha eva pravartakaḥ* "Only sacred greed is the inaugurator". Even the devotees of the Supreme Personality of Godhead cannot experience the beauty of the thoughts of Śrī Rādhā's maidservants! In the Vaiṣṇava-scriptures the glories of the *ekānta* (one-pointed)-devotee are specifically sung. Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī writes (Bhakti Rasāmṛta Sindhuḥ 1.2.58):

tatrāpy ekantīnāṁ śreṣṭha govinda hṛta mānasaḥ
yesāṁ śrīśa prasādo'pi mano hartuṁ na śaknuyat

"Of all the devotees those one-pointed devotees whose hearts have been stolen by Govinda are the best. Even the mercy of Śrīśa (Lord Viṣṇu), the husband of the goddess of fortune, cannot take their minds away!" The one-pointed loyalty of Rādhā's maidservants is even more wonderful than the one-pointed loyalty of Kṛṣṇa's devotees.. They do not even want Śrī Kṛṣṇa's grace without that of Rādhā. Their hearts are exclusively surrendered to Śrī Rādhā's lotus feet. *tavaivāsmi tavaivāsmi na jīvāmi tvayā vinā* ("I am Yours! I am Yours only! I cannot live without You!", Vilāpa verse 96)) is the slogan of that proclaims their loyalty to Rādhā's lotus feet. Śrīla Raghunātha Dāsa cannot tolerate even the idea of worshiping Śrī Kṛṣṇa without Śrī Rādhā. In his Sva Niyama Daśaka (6) he has written:

anādṛtyodgītām api muni-gaṇair vaiṇika mukhaiḥ
pravīṇāṁ gāndharvām api ca nigamais tat priyatamām
yā ekaṁ govindaṁ bhajati kapaṭī dāmbhikatayā
tad abhyarṇe śīrṇe kṣaṇam api na yāmi vratam idam

"Not even for a moment will I go near that impure place where a proud hypocrite worships Govinda alone while neglecting or disrespecting His most expert lover Śrī Gāndharvā (Rādhā), whose glories are sung by the Vedic scriptures and great sages like Nārada Muni, who carries the Vīṇā. That is my solemn vow!" Whoever carries Rādhā's lotus feet in the heart has such a beautiful mind.

Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa cries in anguish and then, by the mercy of Śrīmatī he gets a vision of his gradual morning-services. Svāminī lies to sleep on Her jewelled bedstead, that is as white as the foam of milk, exhausted of Her nocturnal pastimes. In Her dream Kṛṣṇamayī (Śrī Rādhikā, who is always absorbed in Kṛṣṇa-consciousness) relishes the sweetness of Śrī Śyāmasundara. This is clearly visible on the expression of Her beautiful face. The *sakhīs* and *mañjarīs* understand everything about Her wealth of ecstatic love. At that moment Śrī Rādhikā's maternal grandmother Mukharā enters and says: "O Rādhe! My dear granddaughter! Where are You?" Hearing Mukharā's calls and being prodded by Her *sakhīs* Śrīmatī slowly wakes up and sits up on Her bed. Mukharā then sees Kṛṣṇa's yellow *dhotī*, that Rādhikā accidentally put on before leaving Kṛṣṇa in the end of the night, on Her body, and says with a highly suspicious mind: "Alas! Alas! What is this? O Viśākhe! Last evening I saw this yellow cloth on Kṛṣṇa, and now I see it on your *sakhī*! What kind of behaviour is this for a married girl?" When Viśākhā hears Mukharā's words and sees Kṛṣṇa's yellow cloth on Her *sakhī* she is initially alarmed, but then she gets herself together again and says: "O bewildered grandmother! You mistake the golden net of morning-sunrays that pierce through the window and shine on my *sakhī*'s blue garment to be a yellow garment! Don't be vainly afraid!" While Viśākhā says this Tulasī immediately takes Kṛṣṇa's yellow cloth off Svāminī's limbs and exchanges it for Śrīmātī's usual blue garment. When Mukharā looks again and sees the blue dress she becomes ashamed of her mistake and goes off. Then Lalitā and Visākhā and all the other *sakhīs* bathe and dress themselves and enter into Śrīmatī's bedroom, where they become like stars that surround the Rādhā-moon in the evening-sky. When the *sakhīs* come together different waves of *parihāsa-rasa* (playful joking) well up. Meanwhile Śyāmalā-*sakhī*, who is very eager to hear Śrīmatī's passionate *rasodgāra* (recollection of previous amorous pastimes and their concomitant emotions), arrives at Yāvat. Śrīmatī blissfully embraces Śyāmalā and seats her close to Her. Full of *anurāga* Śrīmatī then says: "Sakhi Śyāmale! Just as I thought about you you came! O *sakhi*! If the tree of My desires bears fruits I will consider this to be a good morning! Alas! I don't know when I will be able to see these most ecstatic fruits!" Śyāmalā jokingly replies: "O *sakhi* Rādhe! Your lips have even become bruised from tasting these fruits from the tree of Your yearnings and their red juice has stained Your eyelids, and still You say that this tree has not borne fruit yet! How amazing!" Śrī Rādhikā replied: "O Śyāme! You joke about Me because you don't know My heartache! Just as the lightning illuminates the cloudless night just once, first destroying the darkness and then disappearing again, making the darkness twice as dense as before, similarly after having seen Kṛṣṇa just once, His disappearance doubles the misery of His absence!" The hearts of the *sakhīs* and *mañjarīs* are like fishes that swim on the waves of this ocean of Śrīmatī's passionate *rasodgāra* with Śyāmalā. Then Madhurikā-*sakhī* arrives from Nanda's village and tells Śrīmatī how Paurṇamāsī came to Yaśodā's abode, how Yaśodā and Paurṇamāsī woke Kṛṣṇa up, how they washed His face and how they worshipped Him along with Baladeva, how Kṛṣṇa ate *mākhān-miśri* (Butter with rock-candy, His favorite savoury) and how Kṛṣṇa took Baladeva and His cowherdboy friends along to the *gośālā* to milk the cows. After making Śrīmatī relish the nectar of Kṛṣṇa's morning-pastimes Śyāmalā and Madhurikā leave. As long as these two *sakhīs* were there the fire of Rādhikā's separation was somewhat under control, but after they left its flames rose up high again.[47] Bhāvinī means 'Rādhā, who is mad with ecstatic love for Kṛṣṇa', and the pinnacle of that ecstasy has now been reached. The *kiṅkarīs* know how to serve Svāminī in such a way that

[47] This is quoted from Śrī Viśvanātha Cakravartī's 'Kṛṣṇa Bhāvanāmṛta", chapter 3.

this fire of separation can be extinguished or at least pacified. They keep the pictures of Śyāmasundara and His pastimes marked in their hearts and carry them along wherever they go.

The maidservants have learned all the arts of service from Śyāma. Tulasī comes with fragrant clay and camphor-scented water and starts anointing Svāminī's hands and feet with these natural unguents as part of her morning-service. Tulasī is very expert in washing and rubbing Virahavatī Śrīmatī's lotus feet with soft camphor-scented clay and washing them with camphor-scented water. She knows how the touch of Śyāma's hand feels and she tries to touch Svāminī exactly as Śyāma touches Her. She opens her braided hair and dries Śrīmatī's feet off with them, because that is softer than with the bare hands. Just as she stretches out her hands to start massaging she does not feel these lotus feet anymore. The transcendental vision has faded away and Raghunātha feels the same heartache of separation again. Taking his strong desire in his heart he then laments over the lost devotional service in his *sādhakāveśa*:[48]

he bhāvini! gṛha madhye nitya prātaḥ kāle; sukarpura mṛttikāya suvāsita jale
pāda-padma kobe āmi dhoyābo yatane; sugandhi salile punaḥ kori prakṣālana
sukuñcita keśa dāme mārjana koriyā; caraṇa kamala āmi dibo mochāiyā
vilāpa kusumāñjali parama sampad; sevāra saṅkalpa yoto boḍo adabhuta
haripada jāgi tumi brāhma muhūrtete; ei sukha sevā koro nitya smaraṇete

"O Bhāvini! When can I carefully wash Your lotus feet each morning in Your house with camphor-scented clay and wash them with fragrant water? When will I wipe Your lotus feet dry with my opened braid of curly locks? Vilāpa Kusumāñjali is the greatest treasure, filled with all the different wonderful vows of devotional service. O Haripada! Always get up in the *brāhma muhūrta*-hours[49] and remember this blissful devotional service!"

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VERSE 20:

PRAKṢĀLYA PĀDA KAMALAṀ KṚTA DANTA KĀṢṬHĀṀ
SNĀṆĀRTHAM ANYA SADANE BHAVATĪṀ NIVIṢṬĀM
ABHYAJYA GANDHITATARAIR IHA TAILAPŪRAIḤ
PRODVARTAYIṢYATI KADĀ KIM U KIṄKARĪYAṀ

prakṣālya - having washed; *pāda* - feet; *kamalaṁ* - lotus; *kṛta* - done; *danta* - teeth; *kāṣṭhāṁ* - twig; *snāna artham* - for Your bath; *anya* - other; *sadane* - in a room; *bhavatīṁ* - You; *niviṣṭaṁ* - enter; *abhyajya* - having rubbed; *gandhitataraiḥ* - very fragrant; *iha* - here; *taila* - oil; *pūraiḥ* - with a flood; *prodvartayiṣyati* - she will anoint; *kadā* - when; *kim* - what; *u* - certainly; *kiṅkarī* - maidservant; *iyam* - this.

[48] This service was described by Śrī Ānanda Gopāla Gosvāmī.

[49] Within 48 minutes before sunrise.

When may this maidservant, after washing Your lotus feet and brushing Your teeth with a twig, seat You in the bathroom and, having anointed You with very fragrant oils, massage You there?

Explanations: In the previous verse Śrī Raghunātha had a vision of his service of washing Śrīmatī's lotus feet, and in this verse he sees him/herself rinsing Śrīmatī's mouth, brushing Her teeth with a twig, taking Her into another room and massaging Her with fragrant oil there. How intense is his devotional yearning, and how vivid and genuine are his spiritual visions! When the *sādhaka* has such a vision he feels as if the beloved deity takes him by the hand! The more purified the heart is the more vivid these transcendental experiences are. By the mercy of Śrī Gaurasundara all these beautiful things have been revealed by the *ācāryas*. Is there any greater cause of heart-rending lamentation if I am deprived of the treasure they came to bring, although I was born in Gaurasundara's age?

In the previous verse Śrī Raghunātha dāsa had a vision of himself washing Śrī Rādhikā's lotus feet in the morning and when this vision disappears he feels a greatly burning sensation in his heart. *sevā diyā prāṇa rākho*– "Save my life by giving me Your devotional service!" These aspirations for Rādhārāṇī's devotional service do not arise in an ordinary heart. They will arise in the heart of a person who is able to completely give up his dependence on the material world. How can *rādhā-dāsya* find a place in a heart which is filled with worldly feelings? The working of *māyā* must have disappeared from the mind and intelligence. The Lord tells Arjuna in the Bhagavad Gītā: *mayyarpita mano buddhir yo mad bhaktaḥ se me priyaḥ:* "The devotee who has offered his mind and intelligence to Me, is very dear to Me." *rādhā-dāsya* is even more difficult. Without full absorption it cannot be done. Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī was once absorbed in his *bhajana* in an open place on the bank of Śyāmakuṇḍa while Kṛṣṇa stood right behind him, relishing the sweetness of this devotee's love. Just then two tigers came to drink water from the *kuṇḍa*, passing by right before Raghunātha, who did not notice anything, being completely absorbed. Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī saw what happened from a distance and said: "Raghunātha! You will spread your fame if you sit out here in the open! *bhajana* devoid of humility is lifeless! Unless you engage body, words and mind you can not savour the *rasa* of *bhajana*! Therefore stay in a cottage and meditate on Svāminī's form, qualities and pastimes there!" Sanātana Gosvāmī, whose mind was sprinkled with love for Śrī Raghunātha, did not tell him what had actually happened. From that day on the *kuṭira*-system started at Rādhākuṇḍa.[50]

Lacking his desired service Śrī Raghunātha cries, but by Svāminī's grace He gets a transcendental vision of his *siddha* service. Tulasī uses a soft twig of a mango-tree to brush Śrī Rādhikā's teeth and pours water on Svāminī's hands from the nozzle of a golden pitcher. The water becomes red when it runs over Śrīmatī's hands and the fragrant water she pours over Her face becomes even more fragrant afterwards.[51] Svāminī spits the water with which She flushed Her mouth into a golden *loṭā*. With the fingers of her left hand Tulasī wipes Svāminī's curly locks away from Her limitlessly beautiful and lustrous forehead, cheeks and eyes, to avoid that She becomes overwhelmed by remembering Śyāma through the bluish colour of these locks. It is the service of Bhāvamayī, whose *mahā-bhāva* is thus welling up. When Tulasī takes Svāminī into the bathroom after combing Her hair, she gives Svāminī a matchless savour by showing Her a sweet picture of Śyāmasundara there. Pointing at it with her finger, Tulasī says: "Your teeth look like pomegranate-seeds that attract the parrot of Vṛndāvana! Here He is! Look at Him!" Viśākhā had drawn that picture when she had just fallen in love with Kṛṣṇa

[50] Explanation thus far by Śrī Ānanda Gopāla Gosvāmī.

[51] From Kavi Karṇapūra's 'Kṛṣṇāhnika Kaumudī', Chapter 2.

(*pūrva rāga*). Tulasī reminds Svāminī of the sweet history of that picture, saying: "Svāmini! I remember you once wrote a letter (to Kṛṣṇa), saying: "You are living in My house as a picture and wherever I flee, there You are standing to stop Me with stretched-out arms!" In this way Tulasī makes Svāminī relish the sweetness of Her previous pastimes and simultaneously washes Her mouth and brushes Her teeth. Blessed is this maidservant! This is the internal beauty of Rādhā-*dāsya*! Absorbed in identification with the Guru-given *siddha svarūpa* one serves Svāminījī's *ujjvala mūrti.* The practising devotee should learn services like toothbrushing by meditating on how the eternally perfect maidservant Tulasī performs them. They are the *gurus* of the Yugala-*sevā*, that have descended from the Vraja-*nikuñja* along with Śrīman Mahāprabhu to take the neophyte devotees out of this material world into the *nikuñja*-abode by teaching them *mañjarī bhāva sādhanā – tad bhāva lipsunā kārya vraja lokānusārataḥ* "Those who desire that mood follow in the footsteps of the people of Vraja." (Bhakti Rasāmṛta Sindhu) Śrī Rūpā and Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī are these people of Vraja, that have given the *sādhakas* a perfect example of how to perform *mañjarī-sevā* both in the internal and external bodies.

Tulasī has brought Svāminī back to external consciousness by making Her relish the remembrance of previously played pastimes. After Svāminī brushed Her teeth Tulasī hands Her a bow-shaped tongue-scraper. Svāminī holds this scraper between Her tender index-fingers and thumbs and cleans Her tongue with it. Her body gently rocks along while She scrapes Her tongue. Tulasī smiles slightly when she sees this, for this motion reminds her of a certain *rasika* situation, and by showing Her the splendor of her smile Tulasī makes Svāminī most happy, for it also awakens Her remembrance of this *rasika* situation. Again Tulasī makes Svāminī flush Her mouth and then she wipes Her hands and mouth with a thin white handkerchief. Svāminī then washes Her face once again with the nectar of Her own smile. The devotee who is fixed in *smaraṇa* should be completely free from external consciousness and should identify himself only with his *siddha svarūpa*. The form, sound, touch, taste, and fragrance of Svāminī is the only means of survival for such a devotee. He has closed his eyes for the material world, and all other thoughts are insignificant for him. *prema bhakti sudhānidhi, tāhe ḍubo niravadhi, āra yoto kṣāra-nidhi prāya* (Prema Bhakti Candrikā): "Always dive in the nectar-ocean of loving devotion; everything else is like an ocean of alkali."

The bathroom is in a secret quarter. The door is closed. Svāminī is alone with Tulasī, sitting on a marble chair. All the paraphernalia for Her bath are put ready. Tulasī is rendering the service of rubbing Svāminī's limbs with oil. She reveals Svāminī's Śrī-aṅga (beautiful body)[52] and massages it with oil. Fortunate Tulasī can now freely massage those limbs, that even Śyāma is not allowed to see, with oil! Tulasī massages all of Rādhikā's limbs from tip to toe with fragrant Nārāyaṇa-oil, a special oil for sore muscles, touching Her just like Kṛṣṇa does. This is a heart's service! First of all she opens Svāminī's cloud-blue braid, moistens it with with scented oil and combs it with a jewelled comb. Each strand of hair is dearer to her than millions of lives! Tulasī experiences all of Svāminī's sweetnesses: *gaurāṅge mradimā*, the softness of Her golden body, *smite madhurimā* the sweetness of Her smile, *netrāñcale drāghimā*, the wideness of Her eyes, and *vakṣoje gārimā*, the vastness of Her breasts.[53] When she is finished She calls Rādhikā, thus breaking Her meditation on Kṛṣṇa like a bolt out of the blue. Startled, Śrī Rādhikā asks: "Who is it?.....O, is it you, Tulasi?....Your touch is just like Kṛṣṇa's!"[54]

It is the service of Bhāvamayī (all-emotional Rādhikā) and one must dive in the waves of these *bhāvas*, learning these services from those who have already dived in before:

śrī rūpa mañjarī āra, śrī rati mañjarī sāra,

[52] By undressing Her.

[53] Rādhā Rasa Sudhānidhi, 75

[54] Explanation by Śrī Ānanda Gopāla Gosvāmī..

lavaṅga mañjarī mañjulālī.
śrī rasa mañjarī saṅge, kasturikā ādi raṅge,
prema sevā kore kutūhole

"Blissfully render loving devotional service with Śrī Rūpa Mañjarī, Śrī Rati Mañjarī, Lavaṅga Mañjarī, Mañjulālī Mañjarī, Śrī Rasa Mañjarī, Kasturikā and others."

e sabhāra anugā hoiyā, prema sevā nibo cāiyā,
iṅgite bujhibo sab kāja.
rūpe guṇe ḍagamagi, sadā hobo anurāgī,
vasati koribo sakhīra mājha

(Prema Bhakti Candrikā, Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura)

"I will follow in their footsteps and render loving devotional service. Simply on their hints I will understand what is my duty. I will always be passionately absorbed in Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa's forms and qualities while I reside amongst the *sakhīs*." By simply continuing to meditate on these things the revelations will come. *bhāvite bhāvite Kṛṣṇa sphuraye antare; Kṛṣṇa kṛpāya ajña pāya rasa sindhu pāre* (C.C. Madhya 19, 235) "Through constant meditation Kṛṣṇa will appear in the heart, and by Kṛṣṇa's grace an ignorant soul will cross over the ocean of *rasa*." In Śrīmad Bhāgavata (7.1.28), Nārada Muni gives the example of the absorption of the grassworm:

kīṭaḥ peśas kṛtāruddhaḥ kuḍyāyāṁ tam anusmaraṇ
saṁrambha bhaya yogena vindate tat svarūpatām

"The grassworm, who gets trapped in a hole by a hostile bee, becomes a bee also by always being absorbed in thoughts of it, be it in fear and enmity" If one can go through such a metamorphosis through a material process, what doubt can there be then that one can attain *mañjarī svarūpa*, giving up material bodily consciousness, as a result of intense transcendental devotional meditation?

After massaging Her limbs with oil Tulasī will now perfume Svāminī with lotus-pollen and soft fragrant powders. When Tulasī massaged Her with oil Svāminī experienced the touch of Śyāmasundara. Tulasī's call is falling from the sky for Her. While She perfumes Svāminī Tulasī attracts Her attention by reminding Her of Her previous pastimes with Kṛṣṇa and thus drowns Her in waves of *rasa*. "Svāmini! I remember how one day I perfumed You in a lonely place on the bank of the Yamunā, and that Nāgara was sitting up in a high Kadamba-tree, secretly watching You in this sweet undressed state, and winking to me not to tell You, as if repeatedly begging me with folded hands: "Tulasi, let Me enjoy this sight for a moment!" I gave Him so much relish that time by showing You to Him in this beautiful way, without dress and ornaments!"[55]

Blessed these maidservants are with this sublime service! They know exactly how to serve according to time, place and circumstances, bringing all these relishable memories to Bhāvamayī's heart and making Her swim in waves of *rasa*! Svāminī is immersed in the bliss of Kṛṣṇa-consciousness when She hears Tulasī's *rasika* descriptions! *prīti viṣayānanda tad āśrayānanda* (C.C.) 'The pleasure of the object of love is the pleasure of the subject of love." Blessed is this *kiṅkarī*! She serves exactly according to the requirement and the time. Now follows the relish of the *snāna sevā.* In this way one (service) follows the other.

[55] See Rādhā Rasa Sudhānidhih, verse 24. Description by Śrī Ānanda Gopāla Gosvāmī.

he rādhe! kori tumi pāda prakṣālana; aparūpa danta pāṅkti kori saṁmārjana
snāna lāgi anya gṛhe praveśa korile; vedi'pore bosāibo nivedana chale
gandhe taile komalāṅga kori udvartana; sugandhi ujjvala aṅga koribo darśana
raghunātha dāsa gosvāmī bhajana kuṭīre; prāṇera lālasā yoto nivedana kore
haripada ei sevā cāho yadi cite; dāsa gosvāmīra pāda padma bhajo smaraṇete

"O Rādhe! I will wash Your lotus feet and brush Your amazing row of teeth before bringing You into another room for Your bath, where I will beg You to sit down on a platform. I will anoint Your tender limbs with fragrant oil and then behold Your brilliant fragrant body. Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī sits in his *bhajana kuṭīra* and offers these prayers with all his heart. O Haripada! If you desire such devotional service, then worship the lotus feet of Dāsa Gosvāmī in your *smaraṇa*!"

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VERSE 21:

AYI VIMALA JALĀNĀṀ GANDHA KARPŪRA PUṢPAIR
JITA VIDHU MUKHA PADME VĀSITĀNĀṀ GHAṬAUGHAIḤ
PRAṆAYA LALITA SAKHYĀ DĪYAMANAIḤ PURASTĀT
TAVA VARAM ABHIṢEKAṀ HĀ KADĀHAṀ KARIṢYE

ayi - address of a female person; *vimala* - spotless; *jalānāṁ* - with water; *gandha* - fragrant; *karpūra* - camphor; *puṣpaiḥ* - with flowers; *jita* - defeating; *vidhu* - moon; *mukha* - mouth; *padme* - lotus; *vāsitānāṁ* - scented; *ghaṭa* - jugs; *aughaiḥ* - with floods; *praṇaya* - loving; *lalita* - charming; *sakhyā* - by a girlfriend; *dīyamānaiḥ* - given; *purastāt* - before You; *tava* - Your; *varam* - excellent; *abhiṣekaṁ* - bath; *hā* - O!; *kadā* - when; *ahaṁ* - I; *kariṣye* - will do.

O You whose lotuslike face defeats the moon in beauty! When may I give You an excellent bath with many jugs of spotless water scented with camphor and flowers, brought in advance by a sakhī who is beautified by her love for You?

Explanations: After Śrī Raghunātha dāsa massaged Śrī Rādhā's limbs with oil and perfumed Her, the vision ends, and in order to cast off the misery of separation, he prays to Svāminī's lotus feet. He is the *sevāmaya vigraha*, a transcendental form consisting entirely of devotional service, therefore if there is no devotional service there is no end to his distress. Suddenly he attains the vision of Śrī Rādhikā's bathing-service. "When can I give You an excellent bath (*vara abhiṣeka*)?" Bathing Śrīmatī is the most excellent service, and Tulasī will bathe Svāminī with perfumes and water which is scented with camphor and flowers. The *sakhīs* are the embodiments of *praṇaya*, divine love, and they are bringing the jugs. The jugs, the water - everything is full of *praṇaya*! "I will bathe You with *praṇaya rasa*!" All this can never be experienced without Śrī Rādhikā's mercy! At the beginning of creation the Supreme Lord instructed the creator Brahmā with four verses:

yāvān ahaṁ yathābhāvo yad rūpa guṇa karmakaḥ
tathaiva tattva vijñānam astu te mad anugrahāt

"O Brahma! May you experience the truth about My being, My form, attributes and activities by My grace!" (Śrīmad Bhāgavata 2.9.36) Without the Lord's mercy even Lord Brahmā does not know how to create the world, that's why the Lord mercifully blesses him like this. The Gosvāmīs are even more merciful, for they have recorded their sublime experiences in their own books! Śrīla Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura sings in Prema Bhakti Candrikā:

prema bhakti rīti yoto, nija granthe suvekata
likhiyāchen dui mahāśaya
yāhāra śravaṇa hoite, premānande bhāse cite,
yugala madhura rasāśraya

"These two saints (Rūpa and Sanātana Gosvāmī) revealed all the ways of loving devotion in their own books. By hearing these topics the heart floats in ecstatic love and one takes shelter of the *madhura rasa* (amorous mellow)".

yugala kiśora prema, lakṣa bāṇa yeno hema
heno dhana prakāśilo yārā
jaya rūpa sanātana, deho more prema dhana
se ratana more gole hārā

"They revealed the love of the adolescent Pair of Vṛndāvana, which is a thousand times purer than gold. All glories to Rūpa and Sanātana! Please give me this treasure of love! I will wear this gift like a jewel necklace around my neck!" This jewel necklace, strung with great care, increases the beauty of the aspiring soul. Vilāpa Kusumāñjali is the heart's prayer of Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī. Each of its flower-like lamentations is filled with the honey of divine grief. The practicing devotees relish this honey like bumblebees and are always intoxicated by the strong desire for Śrīmatī Rādhikā's service.

The address *jita vidhu mukha padme* (Her lotusface defeats the moon) is full of secret meanings. It awakens Śrīmatī's remembrance of previous pastimes while She's being served, and it immerses Her heart in deep, intense relish. "Your lotus-like face defeats the Śyāma-moon (blue moon)!". Like an expert handicraftsgirl Tulasī draws a picture of the honey-sweet *kuñja*-pastimes on the canvas of Svāminī's heart. The water, the jugs, the *sakhīs*, everything is full of love for Rādhikā. Once Svāminī is *māninī* in the *kuñja*-house. Why is She angry? That nobody knows! It seems to be causeless pique. The course of love is crooked as a snake, and so there can be pique with or without a cause.

aher iva gatiḥ premnaḥ svabhāva kuṭilā bhavet
ato hetor ahetoś ca yūnor māna udañcati

(Ujjvala Nīlamaṇi)

Śyāma is eager to hear something from Māninī, so He says: "My heart is filled with darkness, please say something and destroy that darkness!" Śrīmatī then proposes the following conditions for Her satisfaction:

tuhu yadi mādhava cāhasi leho; madana sākhī kori khata lekhi deho
choḍabi keli kadamba vilāsa; dūre korobi nija guru-jana āśa
mo vine svapane nā herobi āna; hāmāri vacane korobi jala pāna

rajanī divasa guṇa gāyobi mora; āna yuvatī koi nā korobi kora
aichana kavaca dharabo yaba hāta; tabahi tuyā saie maramaka bāta

(Pada Kalpataru)

"O Mādhava! If You want My love, then write the following note, keeping Cupid as a witness! You will give up all Your prankish pastimes, You will cast Your esteem for Your superiors far away, You will not look at anyone else but Me even in dreams, You will drink only the water of My words, You will sing My glories day and night and You will not take any other girl on Your lap! If You keep this shield in Your hand then I will take You into My heart again!" Śyāma signs this love-letter, desiring for long to be obediently captured by Śrī Rādhā in this way. He is very eager to meet Her, and like a thirsty bumblebee He is eager to drink the nectar from Svāminī's lotuslike face. How beautiful Bhāvamayī's lotuslike face is at that time!

Śyāmacandra (the black moon Kṛṣṇa) is defeated in beauty. In this world the moon cannot relish the beauty of the lotus flowers (since lotus flowers bloom only in sunlight), rather the moon defeats the lotus in beauty, but in the transcendental kingdom of love all these things are reversed. This golden lotus flower is not defeated by the moon in beauty, rather it becomes more beautiful. Therefore the moon fills his heart with the relish of the beauty of the lotus flower and then becomes defeated by its beauty himself. Śyāma-cāṅd has never relished anyone's face like this before. Kṛṣṇa gratifies others by relishing, but He gratifies Himself by relishing Śrī Rādhārāṇī! This (Kṛṣṇa-) moon is full of nectar from drinking the honey of Rādhikā's lotuslike face.

In the *pūrva rāga*-(beginnings of love) condition we can see that the youthful spiritual Cupid of Vṛndāvana does not like anyone else but Rādhārāṇī. Thinking that they are all Rādhā, He embraces golden Jhintī-flowers, landlotuses and so on, telling His *brāhmaṇa*-friend Madhumaṅgala: "O friend! Won't you show Me this Rādhā?" Madhumaṅgala writes Rādhā's name on a lotuspetal. Seeing the syllables of Her name, Kṛṣṇa is satisfied and says: "These syllables are My very life!"[56] Such love He could not find anywhere in this world! That's why the personification of intense bliss (Kṛṣṇa) is so mad after Śrīmatī!

The *sakhīs* bring the water in sapphire jugs, whose colour reminds Svāminī of Śyāma. Seeing them, Svāminī is enchanted. Understanding Bhāvamayī's feelings Tulasī jokingly calls Her *jita vidhu-mukha padme*, and thus makes Svāminī relish the memory of Śyāma and Her pastimes with Him. The bath-water is drawn from the spotless Yamunā and is also coloured like Śyāma. Affectionate Lalitā-*sakhī* does not personally bathe Svāminī, but says to Tulasī: "I will bathe Rādhikā through you!" While Tulasī seats Svāminī on a jewelled platform and slowly pours the fragrant water over Her, Śrī Rūpa Mañjarī hands her the jugs, one *kiṅkarī* most blissfully rubs Svāminī's body with her opened braid, that she keeps in her soft handpalms, and another *kiṅkarī* rubs Her hair. Tulasī bathes Svāminī with lots of water, scented with perfumes, camphor and roses. During this bathingfestival the fish-like eyes of the *sakhīs* and *mañjarīs* swim in the endless nectar stream of Svāminī's beautiful face, eyes, lips, teeth and limbs. Svāminī shivers, but the *kiṅkarīs* know it is of ecstasy and not of the cold. After Her bath is completed Svāminī calls Tulasī: "Tulasi! My bath is finished, dry Me off now!" Suddenly the divine vision vanishes. Even now Svāminī's honey-sweet words flow near the ears. Śrī Raghunātha then cries of grief and prays to Svāminī: "When will You immerse me in the *rasa* of this devotional service?"[57]

he rādhe! kamalini boḍo adabhuta; mukha-padme Kṛṣṇa-candre koro vaśībhūta
tomā prati ye prīti tāhāi lalita; praṇaya svabhāve citta hoy vigalita

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[56] This is quoted from Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī's Vidagdha Mādhava, Act VI.

[57] From 'Śyāmacandra' down to here the explanation is by Śrī Ānanda Gopāla Gosvāmī.

gandha puṣpa sukarpūra suvāsita jale; paripūrṇa kori kobe kalasī sakale
sei gandha jale nitya abhiṣeka kori; ei nivedana pade āmāra īśvarī
haripada cāho yadi e sevā sampad; dāsa gosvāmīra pāda padme thāko avirata

"Hey Rādhe Kamalini (lotus)! You're simply amazing! Your lotuslike face captivates Kṛṣṇa-candra! His love for You is called 'Lalita' (from Dhīra Lalita, or meaning simply 'lovely') and owing to His loving nature Your heart melts. When shall I fill all the jugs with water scented with camphor, flowers and perfumes? O Īśvari! May I always be allowed to shower You with this scented water - this is my submissive prayer to Your lotus feet! Haripada Śila desires this treasure of service, let me remain forever at the lotus feet of Dāsa Gosvāmī!"

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VERSE 22:

PĀNĪYAṀ CĪNAVASTRAIḤ ŚAŚIMUKHI ŚANAKAIḤ RAMYA MṚDVAṄGAYAṢṬER YATNĀD UTSĀRYA MODĀD DIŚI-DIŚI VICALAṆ NETRA MĪNĀÑCALĀYĀḤ ŚROṆAU RAKTAṀ DUKŪLAṀ TAD APARAM ATULAṀ CĀRU NĪLAṀ ŚIRO'GRĀT SARVĀṄGEṢU PRAMODĀT PULAKITA VAPUṢĀ KIṀ MAYĀ TE PRAYOJYAM

pānīyaṁ - drinking water; *cīna* - thin, fine, silk; *vastraiḥ* - with clothes; *śaśimukhi* — moon-faced girl; *śanakaiḥ* - gradually; *ramya* - beautiful; *mṛdu* - tender; *aṅga-yaṣṭeḥ* - of the limbs; *yatnāt* - carefully; *utsārya* - drying; *modāt* - from joy; *diśi diśi* - in all directions; *vicalan* - moving; *netra* - eyes; *mīna* - fishlike; *añcalāyāḥ* - corners; *śroṇau* - on the hips; *raktaṁ* - red; *dukūlaṁ* - silken garment; *tad* - that; *aparam* - other; *atulaṁ* - incomparable; *cāru* - beautiful; *nīlaṁ* - blue; *śira* - head; *agrāt* - from the top; *sarvāṅgeṣu* - over all the limbs; *pramodāt* - of ecstasy; *pulakita* - horripilating; *vapuṣā* - with the body; *kiṁ* - what; *mayā* - by me; *te* - Your; *prayojyaṁ* - for the sake.

O Śaśimukhi (moon-faced girl)! After Your bath, may I gently and carefully wipe the water from Your tender limbs with fine towels as the borders of Your fish-like eyes joyfully move in all directions and then, with goosepimples of ecstasy on my body, after covering Your hips with a red silken petticoat, may I cover all Your limbs, from Your head down, with an incomparibly beautiful blue sārī ?

Explanations: In his *svarūpāveśa* Śrī Raghunātha dāsa has a wonderful vision. 'May *māyā*, in the form of bodily consciousness, not take my mind away from the lotus feet of my beloved deity!' Māyā stops one from remembering the beloved deity. *hoiyā māyāra dāsa, kori nānā abhilāṣa, tomāra smaraṇa gelo dūre* (Prārthanā) "As a servant of *māyā* I desire different things and my remembrance of You has gone far away!" The scriptures and the great teachers have said that the *rāga*-devotee must fix himself firmly on his *svarūpāveśa*:

rāgera bhajana patha, kohi ebe abhimata, loka veda sāra ei vāṇī
sakhīra anugā hoiyā, vraje siddha deha pāiyā, ei bhāve juḍābe parāṇi

(Prema Bhakti Candrikā)

"Now I will tell you my opinion about the path of spontaneous devotion. These words are the essence of the popular and Vedic teachings. If you follow in the footsteps of the *sakhīs* you will attain a spiritual body in Vraja. In this way you will gratify your spiritual self." Nothing else but this can gratify the hearts of the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas! No one can attain perfection while being in bodily consciousness. Although Śrī Sanātana Gosvāmī was the crownjewel of scholars he still humbly enquired from Śrīman Mahāprabhu:

ke āmi, kene āmāya jāre tāpa-traya? ihā nāhi jāni āmi - kemone hita hoy
sādhya sādhana tattva puchite nā jāni; kṛpā kori sab tattva kohoto āpani {C.C.}

"Who am I? Why am I suffering the threefold miseries? I do not know what is my own benefit. I ask You what is the means and what is the goal, for I do not know. Please tell me all these truths Yourself!" Śrīman Mahāprabhu gave the following very simple answer:

jīvera svarūpa hoy - kṛṣṇera nitya dāsa;
kṛṣṇera taṭasthā śakti - bhedābheda prakāśa

"The constitutional position of the spirit soul is that it is the eternal servant of Kṛṣṇa. It is Kṛṣṇa's intermediary energy and is both different and non-different from Kṛṣṇa." {C.C.}

kṛṣṇa nitya dāsa jīva tāhā bhuli gelo; sei doṣe māyā tāra golāya bāndhilo
tāte kṛṣṇa bhaje kore gurura sevana; māyā jāla chuṭe, pāya kṛṣṇera caraṇa

"The living entity is Kṛṣṇa's eternal servant, but he has forgotten that, and for that fault *māyā* has bound him around the neck. But when the soul worships Kṛṣṇa and serves the *guru*'s feet the network of *māyā* will break and he will attain Kṛṣṇa's lotus feet." But the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas do not have their aspirations fulfilled unless they worship Śrī Rādhā and they attain Śrī Rādhā's lotus feet. Śrī Raghunātha is burning in the fire of separation from Śrī Rādhā only. He has no other shelter but Śrī Rādhā's lotus feet.

bhajāmi rādhām aravinda-netrāṁ smarāmi rādhāṁ madhura smitāsyām
vadāmi rādhāṁ karuṇā bharārdrāṁ tato mamānyāsti gatir na kāpi

(Viśākhānandada Stotram - 131)

"I worship lotus-eyed Rādhā, I remember the sweetly smiling face of Rādhā and I speak of Rādhā, who is filled with compassion. In this way there is no other shelter for me."

Śrī Gaurāṅga accepted Raghunātha dāsa as one of His own dear disciples by giving him His string of *guñjā*-beads and His rock from Govardhana Hill, making Raghunātha think: *śilā diyā gosāi more samarpilā govardhane; guñjā mālā diyā sthāna dilā rādhikā caraṇe* (C.C.) "By giving me the rock the Lord has offered me to Govardhana Hill and by giving me this *guñjā*-string He has given me a place at Rādhikā's lotus feet." When Raghunātha thus remembers the Lord's mercy he anxiously cries out for his Prāṇeśvarī. There is no end to this cry of grief, for these pastimes are eternal. A fortunate devotee can hear Raghunātha dāsa lamenting of separation on the bank of Śrī Rādhākuṇḍa even now! When the noise of the passionate material world abates in the deep night the pitiful *rāginī* of these lamentations will resound on the stringed instrument of the sensitive devotee's heart. By the grace of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu one who became mad with love for Śrī Rādhā was Śrī Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī

and one who became mad with love for Śrī Rādhā was Śrī Prabodhānanda Sarasvatī. They are wandering through Vraja, crying: "Where are You, Rādhārāṇī?"[58] Our Raghunātha dāsa wants to see his Īśvarī on the bank of Her sweet *kuṇḍa*:

taṭa madhura nikuñje śrāntayoḥ śrī sarasyāḥ
pracura jala vihāraiḥ snigdha vṛndaiḥ sakhīnām
upahṛta madhu raṅgaiḥ pāyayat tan mithas tair
vrajabhuvi nava yūnor dvandva ratnaṁ didṛkṣe

"I want to see the jewel-like young Couple of Vraja becoming tired of Their extensive watersports in Their beautiful lake, being served honeywine by Their affectionate girlfriends afterwards in a sweet grove on the shore, and making Each other drink this honey-wine."[58]

In his *svarūpāveśa* Śrī Raghunātha dāsa dries Śrīmatī's limbs with a thin towel. Obsessed with transcendental greed Śrī Raghunātha calls Śrī Rādhikā's bathwater *pānīya*, which means 'drinkingwater'. Not only the Yamunā's water is *pānīya*, but also Śrīmatī's bathwater. Why is this water coveted so much by the *kiṅkarīs*? Because every drop is sprinkled with Rādhikā's *mahā bhāva*. In topmost bliss Tulasī rubs those drops from Śrī Rādhikā's divine body with fine white towels that look like the white autumn-clouds drawing pearls (the drops of water) from a steady lightning-streak (Rādhikā's body). Then she squeezes the water out of Svāminī's thick tress of hair with another white towel. It looks as if the darkness (the hair) is grasped by the moonlight (the white towel) and is now crying of pain (in the form of the waterdrops that are dripping out).[59] While Tulasī wipes Svāminī's limbs Svāminī's fishlike eyes blissfully look in all directions. Seeing the sweetness of Śrī Rādhikā's eyes Tulasī addresses Her as Śaśīmukhi, or moonfaced girl. When she does that the remembrance of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa's pastimes in the *kuñja* is woven criss-cross through her mind. Why? Once, during His loveplay with Śrī Rādhikā, Mādhava became enchanted by the beauty of Śrī Rādhikā's eyes and He eagerly kissed them[60], saying: "Ahaha! How beautiful Your eyes are!" Śrī Rādhikā suddenly smiled when She saw that some of Her *kajjal* (eyeliner) got stuck on Kṛṣṇa's lips after He had kissed Her. Seeing Her sweet smile, Kṛṣṇa said: "Oh! What a nectarean smile!" and tasted some of this nectar by kissing Her lips, leaving a black spot of *kajjal* on them. This black spot made Her otherwise spotless divine moon-like face glow like the ordinary moon, that also has so many black spots. When Tulasī sees this restlessness of Svāminī's eyes she awakens the remembrance of this pastime in Her mind and calls Her Śaśimukhi, or 'Moonfaced Girl' here. In this way the comparison between Śrī Rādhikā's spotless moonlike face and the ordinary moon, which is full of spots, is successful.

After squeezing the bathwater out of Svāminī's hair Tulasī takes off Her wet bathing-dress and dresses Her with a red petticoat on the buttocks and a blue *sārī* from tip to toe. What a wonderful loving heart's service! Standing outside of the domain of *prema* one cannot understand anything about Premamayī Rādhā. The *sādhakas* should learn by cribbing from Tulasī how to execute these devotional services. Tulasī puts on Śrī Rādhā's blue garments just to remind Her of Kṛṣṇa (with their colour), and then she puts a red petticoat (that represents Her passionate attachment to Him, red being the colour of passion) on Svāminī's buttocks.

The neophyte devotee should cast all sensual thoughts out of the mind and meditate on these services with a pure heart. Śrīpāda Rāmānujācārya says *bhavati ca smṛter bhāvanā*

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[58] From 'No one can attain..' down to here the explanations are by Śrīla Ānanda Gopāla Gosvāmī.

[58] Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī's 'Vraja Nava Yuva Dvandva Didṛkṣāṣṭakam', verse 7.

[59] From Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī's 'Kṛṣṇa Bhāvanāmṛta', Chapter 4.

[60] Śrī Kṛṣṇa dāsa Kavirāja writes in his Sāraṅga Raṅgadā-commentary on Kṛṣṇa Karṇāmṛta: *nayana-yuga kapolaṁ dantavāso mukhānta stanayuga lalāṭa cumbana sthānam āhur iti.* " Places for kissing are: the eyes, the cheeks, the teeth, inside the mouth, on the breasts and on the forehead."

prakarṣā darśana rūpatā: "When meditation becomes intense it will flow like a stream, free from all other, disturbing thoughts, and the *sādhaka* will experience it as a genuine transcendental perception." Lord Kṛṣṇa Himself has also sung the glories of *smaraṇa* in His Bhagavad-Gītā (8.14):

ananya cetā satataṁ yo māṁ smarati nityaśah
tasyāhaṁ sulabhaḥ pārtha nitya yuktasya yoginaḥ

"O Pārtha! For the mystics who always remember Me with undivided attention and concentration I am easily attained!" According to Śrī Sanātana Gosvāmī Hari-nāma *saṅkīrtana* helps the *sādhaka* to achieve swift success in the practice of *smaraṇa*:

saṅkīrtanād dhyāna sukhaṁ vivardhate dhyānāc ca saṅkīrtana mādhurī sukham
anye'nya samvardhakatānubhūyate'smābhis tayos tad dvayam ekam eva tat

(Bṛhad Bhāgavatāmṛta 2.3.153)

"As a result of *saṅkīrtana* the joy of meditation increases and as a result of meditation the sweetness and the joy of *saṅkīrtana* increases. In this way the two invigorate Each other, and it is experienced as if they are not two separate activities, but only one."

Although the door of Svāminī's dressing room is closed while She's dressing She still looks around restlessly, as if She thinks: "I understand, Sundara (beautiful Kṛṣṇa) is watching Me!" *Kṛṣṇamayī - Kṛṣṇa yāra antare bāhire; yāhā yāhā netra poḍe tāhā Kṛṣṇa sphure* (C.C. Ādi 4,85) "Kṛṣṇamayī means that Kṛṣṇa is inside and outside of Her. Wherever She casts Her glance She sees Kṛṣṇa." Remembering Kṛṣṇa, Lajjāvatī (shy Rādhikā) shrinks out of shyness. Śrīla Dāsa Gosvāmī writes *hrī paṭṭa vastra guptāṅgīṁ*: "She covers Her limbs with the silken garments of bashfulness."[61] After this Tulasī wants to pull the *oḍanā* (veil) over Svāminī's head, but just then her hands remain empty. The vision has stopped and Śrī Raghunātha dāsa prays again to Svāminī's lotus feet for devotional service.

Śrī Rasika-Candra Dāsa sings:

mora nivedana punaḥ; rāi śaśimukhi śuno,
snāna kriyā hoile samāpana
ati sukomala kāya, dibo tāhā muchāiyā,
loye sūkṣma pāṭera vasana

"Listen to my petition once more, O moonfaced Rāi! After I completed Your bath I will dry off Your very tender body with soft silken towels."

tāhe ānandita hoi, niśi diśi neharai,
netra mīna koribe cañcala
dūre pheli ardra vāse, raktāmbara diyā śeṣe
āvaribo nitamba maṇḍala

"This will make You very happy and make Your fish-like eyes restlessly go here and there. Then I take off Your wet bathingclothes, throw them far away and cover Your buttocks with a red petticoat."

puna divya nīlāmbare, diyā tava śiropare,
sarvāṅge ḍhākiyā punarāya
nāhi more upekhibā, ei sevā more dibā

[61] Śrī Rādhikāṣṭottara-Śata Nāma Stotram.

harṣa pulakita hobe kāya

"Then I will hang a divine veil from Your head to cover Your whole body. Don't let me down! Give me this service, so that my body will become studded with goosepimples of ecstasy!"

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VERSE 23:

PRAKṢĀLYA PĀDA KAMALAṀ TAD ANUKRAMENA
GOṢṬHENDRA SŪNU DAYITE TAVA KEŚA-PĀŚAM
HĀ NARMADĀ GRATHITA SUNDARA SŪKṢMA MĀLYAIR
VEṆĪṀ KARIṢYATI KADĀ PRAṆAYAIR JANO'YAM

prakṣālya - having washed; *pāda* - feet; *kamalaṁ* - lotus; *tad* - that; *anukramena* - in sequence; *goṣṭha* - pastures; *indra* - the king; *sūnu* - the son; *dayite* - O dearest One!; *tava* - Your; *keśa pāśam* - hair; *hā* - O!; *narmadā* - a girl named Narmadā; *grathita* - strung; *sundara* - beautiful; *sūkṣma* - fine; *mālyaiḥ* - with garlands; *veṇīṁ* - a braid; *kariṣyati* - will do; *kadā* - when; *praṇayaiḥ* - with love; *janaḥ* - person; *ayam* - this.

O beloved of the prince of Vraja! When will this person, after washing Your lotus feet, lovingly braid Your hair with the beautiful fine garlands made by the florist girl Narmadā?

Explanations: In his *svarūpāveśa* Śrī Raghunātha dāsa has dried off Śrīmatī's limbs after Her bath and dressed Her. Then, when that vision leaves him, he cries and rolls on the bank of Śrī Rādhākuṇḍa, saying: "When will You fulfill the longstanding aspirations of this wretch by giving me my desired service?" His heart melts for want of direct, personal service. Then again humility wells up in his heart and, understanding his unworthiness, he begins to weep again. Still he cannot give up hoping. When he remembers the compassion of his beloved deity his heart is illuminated by the light of hope. This hope is nectar that revives the *sādhaka*, who is suffering the pangs of separation. In Stavamālā Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī prays:

prācīnānāṁ bhajanam atulam duṣkaraṁ śṛṇvato me
nairāśyena jvalati hṛdayaṁ bhakti leśālasasya
viśvadrīcīm aghahara tavākarṇya kāruṇya vīcīm
āśābindūkṣitam idam upaity antare hanta śaityam

"O destroyer of Aghāsura! The greatest souls (like Śukadeva, Ambarīṣa and others) have hardly been able to worship You, and when I hear about that my heart, that is totally devoid of any devotion, feels pain! But when I hear from the scriptures and the sages that the waves of Your compassion are flowing towards everyone, from Lord Brahmā down to the meanest creature, the drops of nectarean hope cool off my heart and soothe it!" {Stavāvalī} When the practising devotee is immersed in remembrance of Śrī Rādhā (*smaraṇa niṣṭha*) he feels as if he directly serves Her and when he gives up that remembrance and returns to worldly thoughts he feels as if he falls from heaven into a desert. Hope is what keeps that practising

devotee alive. He can not do *bhajan* when he feels: "I'm not going to get it!" The hope for attainment makes a seat for himself in the heart of the devotee. *uddhava dāsa āśa kore heraite sakhī saha yugala kiśora* "Uddhava dāsa hopes to see the Yugala Kiśora with Their *sakhīs*!" When meditation becomes very deep visions start coming. Although the Gosvāmīs are eternal associates of the Lord they still relish the flavours of *sādhana*, calling out and lamenting: "Hā Svāmini! Be merciful to me and take me into the kingdom of devotional service!" Then Raghunātha's mind and heart return to the kingdom of transcendental pastimes as he gets a vision of his next gradual service.

In his spiritual identity as Tulasī Śrī Raghunātha takes Svāminī into the dressingroom and washes Her lotus feet again there before she starts drying Svāminī's wet hair by squeezing it in a white cloth and perfuming it with fragrant *aguru*-(aloe) incense. How expert she is in that service! *upāsanā* means: Staying close by. Śrīla Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura sings:

rādhā Kṛṣṇa sevo mui jīvane maraṇe; tāra sthāne tāra līlā dekho rātri dine
ye sthāne ye līlā kore yugala kiśora; sakhīra saṅginī hoiyā tāe hao bhora

"I serve Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa in life or in death and I look at Their playgrounds and Their pastimes day and night. Wherever the adolescent Couple performs Their pastimes I will be, as a companion of the *sakhīs*." When a devotee is fully absorbed in *smaraṇa* it is as if he directly serves the divine Couple. *smaraṇa* means: mental association. A *brāhmaṇa* from Pratiṣṭhānapura burned his finger after sticking it in an offering of hot sweet rice (*kṣīra*) which he had just cooked in his meditation,[62] Śrī Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī got physically diagnosed indigestion from overeating in his meditation,[63] Śrī Kṛṣṇa dāsa bābājī from Govardhana broke a bottle of oil in his meditation, and all of the people that lived at Mānasi Gaṅgā could actually smell it, and the body and clothes of Śrīla Madhusūdana dāsa bābājī of Sūryakuṇḍa were covered with colored powders after he had mentally played Holi with Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa. These examples show the miraculous transcendental power of devotion. If devotion is false, then what is real? Devotion is a portion of the Lord's innate energy (*svarūpa śakti*). Just as devotees have spiritual discussions with Each other (*iṣṭa goṣṭhī*), similarly the *sādhaka* should also awaken his desire to have *iṣṭa goṣṭhīs* with the *sakhīs* and *mañjarīs*: *thāko tādera sāthe, boso tāder kāche, mahatera vāṇīra śakti āche* "Stay with them, sit with them, for the words of the great devotees have great power!" The scriptures and the great saints say that when the devotee's devotion ripens he can see his beloved deity in all the moving and non-moving creatures.

mahā bhāgavata dekhe sthāvara jaṅgama; tāhā tāhā hoy tāra śrī Kṛṣṇa sphuraṇa
sthāvara jaṅgama dekhe, nā dekhe tāra mūrti; sarvatra hoy nija iṣṭa deva sphūrti

"The pure devotee sees only Śrī Kṛṣṇa when he looks at the moving and nonmoving entities. He sees the moving and nonmoving beings, but he does not see their forms. Everywhere he perceives his beloved deity." (C.C. Madhya 8)

sarva bhūteṣu yaḥ paśyed bhagavad bhāvam ātmanaḥ
bhūtāni bhagavaty ātmānyeṣa bhāgavatottamaḥ

"He who sees only his worshipable Lord in all the living entities and who sees all the living entities in his worshipable Lord is the greatest devotee." (Ś. Bhāg 11.2.45) Devotion makes the Lord perceivable through all the devotee's senses. This is the greatness of devotion.

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[62] This is described in the Bhaviṣya Purāṇa.

[63] This is described in Bhakti Ratnākara.

Śrī Rādhā sits on a golden platform and Tulasī combs Her curly monsooncloud-like hair with a golden comb, making it look like a golden net (the comb) that is dragged through the blackish Yamunā-water (the hair), sometimes contracting it by holding it in her left fist and sometimes allowing it to expand and to swallow Her blooming lotuslike face when she opens her left fist and combs it again[64]. What a loving service! Each single strand of hair is dearer to Tulasī than millions of lives! These are, after all, no ordinary hairs! The *ācāryas* define Śrīmatī's hair as follows:

rādhā manovrtti latāṅkurāgataḥ Kṛṣṇasya ye bhāvanayā tad ātmatām
sūkṣmāyatāḥ prema sudhābhiṣekatas te niḥsṛtāḥ keśa miṣāt bahir dhruvam

(Govinda Līlāmṛta 11,112)

"By always thinking of Kṛṣṇa the vine-sprouts of Rādhā's thoughts and desires have become black, and after they were sprinkled by the nectar of love for Him they have come out as Her thin, long hair." The maidservants experience this more vividly than anybody else, for their hearts are non-different from Svāminī's! Outside of *prema*'s domain there can be no acquaintance with Premamayī Rādhā at all!

Tulasī has finished combing Rādhikā's hair and sits down on her knees behind Her now to braid it with loving expertise. She sits behind Svāminī, but she strongly desires to see Her beautiful face. That's why she calls Her *goṣṭhendra sūnu dayite*: O beloved of the prince of Vraja! This address is full of secrets. How many emotions can be known through this address! Svāminī is Kṛṣṇa's *bhāvamayī* (full of love for Him) and the *kiṅkarīs* are Svāminī's *bhāvamayī*. Śrīmatī loves Śrī Kṛṣṇa and the maidservants love Śrīmatī. Tulasī maddens Svāminī by awakening the remembrance in Her of one of Her sweet sports with Kṛṣṇa. The word *goṣṭhendra sūnu dayite* can mean 'You are the beloved of the prince of Vraja' or 'the prince of Vraja is Your beloved' (Because it is a *bahu-vrīhi* compound in the sixth tense, which is mutually applicable). This shows Their mutual love. Tulasī says: "At the end of Your pastimes in the *kuñja* Śyāma is making Your braid with His own hands, and You also put His crown on. Or sometimes, out of deep love, You may reverse roles and Śyāma may think Himself to be You and You think of Yourself as Him and then He will put His crown on Your head and You will lovingly braid His hair. Can I also once serve You so expertly and lovingly as Śyāma does? I am Your poor unqualified maidservant. Be so merciful to give me that service! That is my desire!"[65] When Svāminī hears Herself being called 'beloved of the prince of Vraja', She is overwhelmed and thinks that it is Śyāma who makes Her braid instead of Tulasī. She keeps Her eyes half closed while She relishes that thought and feeling, like a bee falling into the nectar of a blue lotus flower. Blessed is Tulasī! Blessed is her service! With one address she manages to crystallize the *līlā-rasa* and submerge Svāminī in relishing that savour. The practising devotee should try to remember these sweet pastimes every day. When the *svarūpāveśa* remains *māyā* has no chance to contaminate the devotee's mind. All of *māyā*'s disturbances are caused by bodily consciousness. Narmadā, the florist's daughter, makes beautiful small garlands with fragrant Yūthī and Cāmelī-flowers for Tulasī to make a braid with. With a beautiful handicraft! Just as Tulasī stretches out her hand to do the work the spiritual vision disappears and she cries and laments out of disappointment: "When can this fallen soul lovingly make Your braid with small garlands that were strung by Narmadā?"
Śrī Rasika-Candra Dāsa sings:

puna pāda padma duti, pākhālibo paripāṭī,

[64] Kṛṣṇa Bhāvanāmṛta Chapter 4.
[65] This pastime is described by Śrī Ānanda Gopāla Gosvāmī.

suvāsita jale sayatane
nija keśa pāśa diyā, dibo tāhā muchāiyā,
bosāibo vicitra āsane

"Again I will carefully and expertly wash Your lotus feet with fragrant water and dry them off with my own hair before I seat You on a wonderful throne."

śuno śuno vrajarāja nandana dayite!
ācari cañcara keśa; veṇī bānāite veśa,
bosibe e dāsī harṣa cite

"Listen, O listen, beloved of the prince of Vraja! After combing Your hair this maidservant will blissfully sit down to make it into a braid."

nānā phula gānthi mālā, bhariyā kusuma dālā,
narmadā ānibe tvarā kori
kobe tāhā prīta hoiyā, sei phula mālā loiyā,
vicāribo vicitra kavarī

"Then Narmadā quickly comes with a basket containing a garland made of different flowers. With love I will take that garland and string it into a wonderful braid with Your hair!"

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VERSE 24:

SUBHAGA MṚGAMADENĀKHAṆḌA ŚUBHRĀṀŚUVAT TE
TILAKAṀ IHA LALĀṬE DEVI MODĀD VIDHĀYA
MASṚṆA GHUSṚṆA CARCAM ARPAYITVĀ CA GĀTRE
STANĀYUGAM API GANDHAIŚ CITRITAṀ KIṀ KARIṢYE

subhaga - beautiful; *mṛgamadena* - with musk; *akhaṇḍa* - full; *śubhrāṁśuvat* - like a moon; *te* - Your; *tilakam* - *tilaka*; *iha* - here; *lalāṭe* - on the forehead; *devi* - O Goddess!; *modāt* - out of joy; *vidhāya* - placing; *masṛṇa* - shining; *ghusṛṇa* - *kuṅkuma; carcam* - ointment; *arpayitvā* - placing; *ca* - and; *gātre* - on the body; *stanayugam* - on both breasts; *api* - even; *gandhaiḥ* - with perfumes; *citritaṁ* - pictures; *kiṁ* - what; *kariṣye* - will do.

O Goddess, may I then joyfully make a fullmoon-like tilaka on Your forehead, anoint Your body with fine glistening vermilion and make pictures on Your breasts with perfumes?

Explanations: Śrī Raghunātha suffers intolerable agony because he cannot attain his beloved deity, and then again he relishes the flavours of Svāminī's devotional service in a transcendental vision. After bathing Svāminī he dried Her off, dressed Her and made Her braid, and now he will make a *tilaka*-mark on Her forehead. How can the devotee continue on his path if he never experiences or relishes anything? This relish causes the devotee to

forget everything else and awakens his constant meditation on the Lord. This is the purpose of *upāsanā*. In the introduction to his commentary to the Chandogya Upaniṣad, Śrīpāda Śaṅkarācārya has explained the word *upāsana* as follows: *upāsanaṁ tu yathā-śāstra samāpitaṁ kiñcid ālambanam upādāya tasmin samāna citta vṛtti santāna karaṇam tad avilakṣana pratyayāntaritam iti:* "*Upāsana* means to hold on to a certain subject of meditation, according to the scriptural injunctions, with such one-pointedness that no other subject matter can enter." For Śrī Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī there is nothing in this world except his connection with Śrī Rādhā. In Bhakti Ratnākara (Fifth Wave) it is described how, in his spiritual absorption, he rejected buttermilk from Sakhīsthalī, the village of Rādhā's arch-rival Candrāvalī:

dāsa nāme eka vrajavāsī etha roy; dāsa gosvāmīra tāre sneha atiśoy
teho eka dina sakhī-sthalī grāme gelā; bṛhat palāśa patra dekhi tuli' nilā
dāsa gosvāmīra kothā mone mone kohe; annādika tyāga koilā dāruṇa virahe
eka donā takra piye niyama tāhāra; ithe kichu atirikta hoibe āhāra
aiche mone kori ghare āsi donā koilā; tāhe takra loiyā raghunātha āge āilā
navya patra donā dekhi' jijñāse gosāi; e bṛhat patra āji pāilā kon ṭhāi
dāsa kohe - sakhī-sthalī genu gocāraṇe; pāiyā uttama patra āninu ekhāne
sakhī-sthalī nāma śuni' krodhe pūrṇa hoilā; takra saha donā dūre phelāiyā dilā
koto kṣaṇe sthira hoiyā kohe dāsa prati; se candrāvalīra sthāna - na yāibā tathi

"There was one Vrajavāsī (inhabitant of Vraja) named Dāsa who loved Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī very much. He went to the village of Sakhīsthalī (close to the town of Govardhana) and found a big leafcup there, which he brought along, thinking of Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī, who had given up eating all solid food out of coarse separation from Rādhārāṇī. Dāsa thought: "It is Raghunātha Dāsa's rule to drink only one cup of buttermilk a day. When I give Him this bigger leafcup he can eat a little more", and brought some buttermilk from his house to fill up the big leafcup. When he came before him, Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī, seeing the new cup, asked him: "Where did you get this big leaf cup from?" Dāsa said: "I went to Sakhī-sthalī to herd my cows and I found this good leaf cup there and brought it to you!" Hearing the name 'Sakhī-sthalī', Raghunātha Dāsa became filled with anger and threw the leaf cup with the buttermilk far away. After some time he calmed down and told Dāsa: "That is the place where Candrāvalī lives! Don't go there!"

How wonderful is Śrī Raghunātha's loyalty to Śrī Rādhā! What else can there be but strong feelings of possessiveness towards someone that you have known for eternity! Anyone who has tasted even a little of this spiritual practice will get some of this feeling of possessiveness towards Rādhārāṇī also, and, even though it may not be so strong, he will also feel some separation from Śrī Rādhā! The nectar of Śrī Rādhā's lotus feet is the greatest support for a devotee. "The body and everyone and everything connected with it is all temporary, it will all go! With whom shall I stay then? I don't have any other place to stay but Śrī Rādhā's lotus feet!" This is the mood of an *ekānta*-(one-pointed) devotee. When feelings of separation set in, the devotee feels intolerable agony. He cannot eat, sleep and be merry anymore, and nothing can please his heart anymore. He can only be consoled by experiencing Svāminī's form, taste, sound, touch and smell, whether in dreams, *smaraṇa* or during revelations.

In his spiritual identity as Tulasī, Śrī Raghunātha sits down close to Śrīmatī, lovingly holds Her chin with her left hand and a brush in her right hand, and starts to make full moon-shaped *tilaka* of musk on Her golden forehead.[66] First she draws a circle of *aguru* mixed with musk, within that circle she draws a beautiful fine lotus with lines of *sindūra* and in that fine lotus she makes a *tilaka*-dot with sandalwoodpulp mixed with camphor. This sweet *tilaka*, that

[66] This entire explanation is by Śrī Ānanda Gopāla Gosvāmī.

shimmers on Svāminī's sweet forehead, is known as the Kāma-yantra, or Cupid's instrument, is able to control Śyāmasundara and give Him the greatest bliss. It reminds Svāminī of Śyāma because it has the same colour and fragrance as His. While Tulasī relishes all this beauty she calls Svāminī *devi*. How many meanings are hidden in this single word!

devi kohi dyotamānā paramā sundarī;
kimvā Kṛṣṇa krīḍā pūjāra vasati nagarī

"Devi means the most effulgent and most beautiful girl, or the girl who lives in the town of Kṛṣṇa's worship." (C.C. Ādi 4) She is most beautiful because of Her *mādana mahā bhāva*, which is not a material kind of beauty. Rasika Śekhara Kṛṣṇa cannot appreciate mere surface beauty which is not arising from pure love for Him. He does not accept any bliss which does not come forth from His pleasure-potency. Only the flavour of pure love is dear to Him. The word '*devī*' also means *dīvyati krīḍati asyāṁ,* She who plays with Kṛṣṇa, satisfying Him with Her worship. Because Kṛṣṇa plays in Rādhā She is called *devi*. He plays in other beloveds also of course, but Śrī Rādhā is the fountainhead of all of them! Hence She is the empress of the town of Kṛṣṇa's worship! The word *pūjā* means: establishing gratification. Śrī Rādhārāṇī is the endless storehouse of things that can gratify Śrī Kṛṣṇa. She can madden Him with desires that He could not even have imagined Himself! She is *kṛṣṇendriya viśrāma vidhu śālikā*: The resting place for all of Kṛṣṇa's senses. There is no other such a playground for Kṛṣṇa anywhere! How many sweet pastimes Tulasī reminds Rādhikā of while she calls Her '*devī*' and paints the *tilaka* on Her forehead! The black colour and the scent of the musk both remind Svāminī of Śyāma. Svāminī is immersed in it and pours Her body into the stream of Tulasī's devotional wishes. Blessed is this maidservant! There is no comparison to her love, which is marked by an abundance of feelings of possessiveness. Rādhārāṇī trusts Her maidservants even more than She trusts Herself! They understand things before Svāminī Herself understands them. Śrī Raghunātha says: "I don't just want devotional service; I want devotional service which is nourished by love! *praṇaya puṣṭa dāsyāptaye*. There seems to be a kind of feeling of non-difference of heart between Śrī Rādhikā and Her maidservants. All of Rādhārāṇī's heart's experiences arise within the maidservants' hearts also. Śrī Rādhā is the Self of the Self, how intolerable is the misery of not attaining Her lotuslike feet! The maidservants feel the same pain of separation from Kṛṣṇa that Rādhārāṇī feels and the same bliss of meeting with Kṛṣṇa that Rādhārāṇī feels. The course of love can not be stopped! It enabled Mahāprabhu to break through the three bolted doors of His Gambhīrā-cell (at Purī) to go out and 'meet' Kṛṣṇa! Another vision is the only thing that can save Raghunātha's life during this painful time of separation. The relish of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa's sweetness in a transcendental vision is his very life-support. Each devotee needs such visions as food-for-the soul. *manera smaraṇa prāṇa, madhura madhura dhāma, yugala vilāsa smṛti sāra* (Prema Bhakti Candrikā) "The life-force of the mind is *smaraṇa*, which is the abode of all sweetness, and the essence of remembrance is the pastimes of Śrī Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa." From the words of the Gosvāmīs we can understand how expert they are in relishing the sweetness of these transcendental pastimes. Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī writes:

gaveṣayantāv anyonyaṁ kadā vṛndāvanāntare;
saṅgamayya yuvāṁ lapsye hāriṇaṁ pāritoṣikam

(Kārpaṇya Pañjikā Stotram - 35)

"When, as You search for Each other in Vṛndāvana, will I bring You together and get necklaces from You as a reward?" Kṛṣṇa begs Śrīmatī Rūpa Mañjarī: "Rūpa! Won't you let Me meet your Svāminī?" Rūpa says: "What reward shall I get then?" Kṛṣṇa gives her a necklace as a reward and Śrī Rūpa Mañjarī keeps it on her chest. Svāminī awards Her maidservant by

kissing Her Nāgara, and Rūpa keeps this vision as a necklace on her chest. The sweetness of the Yugala Milana (meeting) is her best reward.[67]

Tulasī expertly draws scented pictures of Makarī-fishes on Svāminī's golden pitcher-like breasts and anoints Her beautiful body, that mocks the beauty of molten gold, with glossy vermilion. The black colour and the fragrance of the musk of the *tilaka* reminds Svāminī of Śyāma. Svāminī is overwhelmed by these incitements. The expert dresser Tulasī makes Svāminī bloom up by reminding Her of the beautiful time when She first fell in love with Śyāma (*pūrva rāga*): Once Svāminī was in an ecstatic swoon for six hours after hearing Hari's flutesong and the *sakhīs*, having failed in all their endeavours to wake Her up, finally brought Her to Paurṇamāsī's straw hut. Paurṇamāsī (the personification of Kṛṣṇa's mystic illusion Yogamāyā, who always arranges for Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa's meeting) had Madhumaṅgala (her grandson) call Kṛṣṇa and tell Him that Śrī Rādhā had fainted because of His fluteplaying. When Kṛṣṇa finally came Vṛndādevī forcibly placed His lotus feet, that are like the leaves of the reviving Sañjīvanī-plant, on Rādhikā's heart, making Her wake up instantly. When She opened Her eyes and saw Kṛṣṇa She softly wept, making Kṛṣṇa shyly walk away. Which poet could possibly describe even a drop of the transcendental bliss that Śrī-Śrī Rādhā-Mādhava experienced when Kṛṣṇa's lotusfoot touched Rādhikā's heart? When Kṛṣṇa walked away, the *kuṅkuma* from Rādhikā's breasts, that got stuck on His footsole, was printed on the grass of Vṛndāvana and the lowclass Pulinda-girls felt great joy from smearing that *kuṅkuma* on their own breasts. That is described in the Śrīmad Bhāgavata (10.21.17).[68] For this reason, Tulasī blissfully rubs this reddish *kuṅkuma* on Śrī Rādhikā's breasts or makes pictures of wonderful playful Makarī-fishes on them while drawing pictures of these past sports on the slab of Her heart. *rasa* (spiritual flavour) is thus served by *rasa* in the kingdom of *rasa*.
Śrī Rasika-Candra Dāsa sings:

jini pūrṇa śarad indu, diyā mṛga mada bindu,
tilaka raciyā dibo bhāle
kuṅkuma kasturī paṅke, tava cāru gaura aṅge
lepana koribo kutūhale

"With spots of musk I will make a *tilaka* like the full moon in autumn on Your forehead and I will eagerly anoint Your beautiful golden body with an unguent of *kuṅkuma* and musk."

nānā vidha gandha sāre, tava stana yugopare,
citrita koribo sayatane
karuṇā nayana hero, dāsī aṅgikāra koro,
sevā diyā rākhaho caraṇe.

"I will carefully make pictures on Your breasts with different excellent perfumes. Please cast a merciful glance at me and accept me as Your maidservant! Please keep me at Your lotus feet to serve You!"

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VERSE 25:

SINDŪRA REKHĀ SĪMANTE DEVI RATNA ŚALĀKAYĀ

[67] This paragraph is quoted from Śrī Ānanda Gopāla Gosvāmī.

[68] This paragraph is quoted from Śrī Jīva Gosvāmī's comment ary on the Bhāgavata verse 10.21.17.

MAYĀ YĀ KALPITĀ KIṀ TE SĀLAKAṀ ŚOBHAYIṢYATI

sindūra - vermilion; *rekhā* - line; *sīmante* - in the part; *devi* - O Goddess!; *ratna* - jewelled; *śalākayā* - with a pencil; *mayā* - by me; *yā* - what; *kalpitā* - considered; *kiṁ* - what; *te* - Your; *sa alakam* - with hair; *śobhayiṣyati* - will beautify.

O Goddess! When will I make a stripe of sindūra (vermilion) on Your part with a jewelled pencil? That will make Your hairlocks so beautiful!

Explanations: After he painted wonderful, playful Makarī-fishes on Śrī Rādhikā's breasts Śrī Raghunātha experiences the pain of separation when this vision vanishes from him. Then, when he experiences the flavours of devotional service again, the ocean of his bliss wells up again. In this way it goes on continuously. Nothing in this world can compare to that succession of bliss and agony, which is always present in a lively way in the hearts of the *rasika* devotees. It is as if the ocean of joy and sorrow is being churned, producing the reviving nectar (of union) and the concomitant poison (of separation). The hearts of the loving devotees are constantly immersed in the ocean of *prema* and the clashing waves in that ocean sometimes produce the transcendental agony of separation and sometimes the transcendental bliss of meeting. The devotees are permanently inundated by these waves as they advance towards their beloved deity.

In this verse Tulasī applies a line of *sindūra,* reddish powder that married girls wear, on Śrīmatī's part. It is the service of the embodiment of ecstatic love. Tulasī sits in front of Śrīmatī and puts the stripe of *sindūra* on Her part with deep concentration, using a jewelled pencil with steady hand. That *sindūra* shines like the morning-red in the deep dark night of Śrī Rādhikā's hair. Tulasī is amazed to see that beauty and says: "Devi! When will that *sindūra*, that I apply now with a jewelled pencil, beautify Kṛṣṇa's curly locks also? It may stick on His hair during some special love-pastime You play! At that time it may seem that the work I'm doing now will be ruined, but if this happens during Your love-pastimes it is actually making my endeavours (of making Kṛṣṇa attracted to You) a complete success! This decoration is not made for You, nor for me; only Śyāma is qualified to enjoy it!" Blessed is that maidservant, who can make Śyāma mad after Svāminī! Svāminī independently experiences how Śyāma alone is qualified to see Her clothing, and no one else.[69] That's why one day She told Her girlfriends in *rasodgāra :*

marame kohiluṅ, mo puna ṭhekiluṅ
se janāra pirīti phāṅde
rāti dina cite, bhāvite bhāvite,
tāre se parāṇa kāṅde

"He told Me what's on His heart and He touched Me again! He was trapped in the noose of love; night and day He was thinking of Me and crying His life-airs out!"

buke buke mukhe, caukhe lāgi thāke,
tamu satata hārāya

[69] This pastime is described by Śrīla Ānanda Gopāla Gosvāmī.

o buka ciriyā, hiyāra mājhāre,
āmāre rākhite cāya

"Although He keeps His chest on My breasts and His face on My face, and He constantly looks at Me, He still feels as if He lost Me. Tearing open His chest He wants to keep Me in His heart."

hāra nahoṁ piyā, galāya paraye
candana nahoṁ mākhe gāya
aneka yatane, ratana pāiyā,
thuite ṭhāi nā pāya

"He does not wear His favorite necklace around His neck, nor does He anoint His body with sandalpaste anymore. With great effort He attained a jewel, but He does not know where to keep it."

karpūra tāmbūla, āpani sājiyā,
mora mukha bhari deya
hāsiyā hāsiyā, cibuka dhariyā,
mukhe mukha diyā leya

"He singlehandedly makes betel-leaves with camphor and fills My mouth with them. He laughs and smiles and holds My chin as He takes the *pān* out of My mouth with His mouth."

sājāiyā kācāiyā, vasana porāiyā,
āveśe loiyā kore.
dīpa loiyā hāte, mukhe nirakhite,
titila nayane lore

"He dresses Me, bathes Me and ornaments Me and ecstatically takes Me on His lap. He takes a lamp in His hand to look at My face as tears trickle from His eyes."

caraṇe dhariyā, yāvaka racai,
āulāiyā bāndhaye keśa.
balarāma cite, bhāvite bhāvite,
pāṅjara hoilo śeṣa

"Holding My feet He anoints them with footlac and He binds My dishevelled hair into a braid. As Balarāma dāsa meditates on this pastime the song ends."

Tulasī awakens all these sweet memories within Svāminī's mind while marking Her part with a line of *sindūra*. Now expert Tulasī holds a big mirror before Bhāvamayī (all-emotional Rādhikā) and says: "Just see how I've decorated You! I have dressed You, but now I want to see my work spoiled (by Śyāma)!" Svāminī is startled when She sees Her own form in the mirror. Proudly She thinks: "If even My undecorated body makes Śyāma mad, what then to speak of this fully decorated body? How long before I can make My hero enjoy this sweet form of Mine? When can I make Him happy with this limitless youthful beauty, that knows no match in all the three worlds?"[70] Such beautiful thoughts are even desired by the Lord. During a particular pastime He sees His own reflection in Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī's breasts and with an enchanted heart He says:

nīlendīvara-vṛnda-kānti-laharī cauraṁ kiśora dvayaṁ
tvayy etat kucayoś cakāsti kim idaṁ rūpena me mohanaṁ

[70] Kṛṣṇa Bhāvanāmṛta Chapter 4

tan mām ātma sakhīṁ kuru dvi taruṇīyam nau dṛḍham śliṣyati
sva cchāyām abhivīkṣya muhyati harau rādhā smitaṁ pātu naḥ

(Rādhā Rasa Sudhānidhiḥ - 246)

May Śrī Rādhā protect us as She smiles when She hears Hari, who sees His own reflection in Her shining golden breasts, telling Her: "There are two beautiful boys visible on Your breasts, their luster steals the glories of blue lotus flowers and they completely enchanted Me! Make Me Your *sakhī*, so that these two boys can tightly embrace us young girls!" Svāminī reacts by saying: "Śyāma! You are the young transcendental Cupid Himself! Is the desire to enjoy Your own sweetness so strong?" And She thinks to Herself: "How beautiful I am! It would all be wasted if beautiful Śyāma couldn't relish it!" Kṛṣṇa's happiness is Rādhārāṇī's happiness. She dresses Herself with the strong desire to make Kṛṣṇa relish it.

The address *devi* simply touches the heart! "Unfortunately I am unable to speak with Her. Why don't I desire to speak with Her, to whom I was introduced long ago by my Guru, although I have a desire to speak with people that I'm just newly acquainted with? What kind of a devotee am I if I don't get any response from Her, although I'm repeating the words of the Gosvāmīs? Surely if I would purely repeat and practise the words of the *ācāryas* She would respond!" The Gosvāmīs' description of the qualities, names and pastimes of the Divine Pair will ultimately awaken eagerness in the devotee's heart and the devotee's eager calls will pull the bearer of the holy name towards him. "When I call my wordly friends they respond, but You are dearer to me than millions of lives - why don't You respond then?" Such aspirations should arise within the heart of the eager devotee. Eagerness is the very life of *bhajana*, and without eagerness *bhajana* is lifeless. The Lord also wants the devotees' *bhajan* to be filled with eagerness. In Śrīmad Bhāgavata (Canto 1, Chapter 6) the Lord told Devarṣi Nārada: "Just to increase your eagerness for Me I disappeared after once revealing Myself to you. I play these tricks on you just to make all of your senses absorbed in Me!" Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī, the embodiment of eager devotion, carries a strong desire for devotional service in his heart when he addresses Śrī Rādhā with the word *devi*[71]. *Kṛṣṇa krīḍā pūjāra vasati nagarī* "She is the empress of the town of Kṛṣṇa's worship". When will I see Śyāma's curly locks become reddened by the *sindūra* that I apply to Your part?" Why wouldn't this ornamentation (*śṛṅgāra*) become filled with *śṛṅgāra rasa* (the flavours of eros)? The Nāyaka (hero) is *śṛṅgāra-rasa* personified, the Nāyikā is *mahā bhāva* personified and the bodies of the maidservants are made of *sevā-rasa* (the flavour of devotional service). The verbal root *div* means play. "You should play in such a way that the line of *sindūra* that I made on Your part will be spoiled!" There are three kinds of *śṛṅgāra*-play: 1) One in which Kṛṣṇa leads and Svāminī assists 2) One in which Svāminī leads and Kṛṣṇa assists, and 3) One in which both are leading. "Rasa itself will decorate You! May I see this after Your pastimes!"[72] Svāminī becomes overwhelmed when She hears the moving words of the maidservant. How can Svāminī be decorated by *rasa* (spiritual flavour)? By Her crushed flower garland, Her half opened braid, Her broken necklaces, Her loosened dress and ornaments, Her inwardly exhausted, blooming and rolling eyes and Her externally softly crying, yet sweetly smiling face. Śrī Kṛṣṇa Himself, who is transcendental blissful flavour personified (*rasānāṁ rasatamaḥ*, He is the greatest flavour of all flavours) and who the devotees want to experience in the innermost core of their hearts, loses Himself in beholding that beauty. A loving poet has written about Kṛṣṇa's experiences:

līlā ante sukhe ihāra ye aṅga mādhurī

[71] In 'Stavāvalī' are the brilliant examples of how wonderfully eager Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī prayed for the devotional service of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī. A devotee should particularly study his 'Utkaṇṭha daśakam'.

[72] From "Tulasī awakens..." down to here the explanation is by Śrī Ānanda Gopāla Gosvāmī.

tāhā dekhi sukhe āmi āpana pāsari

"Seeing the sweetness of Her limbs after Our blissful pastimes I forget Myself in happiness!" (C.C. Ādi 4, 256) Can there be any doubt that the devotees who are surrendered to Śrī Rādhā and who are absorbed in *mañjarī bhāva* are floating endlessly on the waves of *rasa*? The lives of such devotees are thoroughly pervaded by the highest experience of *rasa,* this is proven by the books written by the sensitive *rasika* saints. This material world is the playground of God's endlessly variegated pastimes, and there are innumerable creatures there with innumerable different feelings. Some feel like a *karmī* (result-oriented worker), some like a *yogī* (mystic), some like a *jñānī* (wise man), some like a *bhakta* (devotee of a personal God) and there are so many other feelings with which people wander over the earth, but beyond all these classes of people there are those who have been ornamenting the earth since time immemorial by carrying a particular kind of extraordinary feeling, and these people are known as *rasikas*. Rasa is the very heart of the Lord, and therefore it is endless, complete and not limited by time, place or circumstances. It is universal and self-manifest and finds its culmination in Kṛṣṇa's pastimes in Vraja, and most particularly in Śrī-Śrī Rādhā-Mādhava's *nikuñja-līlā-rasa*. The *ācāryas* relished this personally and recorded their experiences in their books out of their endless mercy on the practising devotees of this material world. How many sweet things Tulasī is saying to Svāminī while she puts the *sindūra* in Her part! Suddenly the vision vanishes and Śrī Raghunātha weeps:

sindūrera rekhā tava sīmanta upari; racita koribo ratna-śalākāya kori
āmāra kalpita sei sudṛśya sindūra; alakā sahita śobhā ho'be ki pracura

"I will make a line of *sindūra* on Your part with a jeweled pencil. Will this nicely applied *sindūra* greatly enhance the beauty of Your locks?" (Śrī Rasika-Candra dāsa)

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VERSE 26:

HANTA DEVI TILAKASYA SAMANTĀD
BINDAVO'RUṆA SUGANDHI RASENA
KṚṢṆA MĀDAKA MAHAUṢADHI MUKHYĀ
DHĪRA HASTAM IHA KIṀ PARIKALPYĀḤ

hanta - alas!; *devi* - O Goddess!; *tilakasya* - of the *tilak*; *samantād* - all around; *bindavaḥ* - drops; *aruṇa* - crimson; *sugandhi* - fragrant; *rasena* - with the substance; *Kṛṣṇa* - of Kṛṣṇa; *mādaka* - intoxicating ; *mahā* - great; *auṣadhi* - medicinal herb; *mukhyā* - chief; *dhīra* - steady; *hastam* - hand; *iha* - here; *kiṁ* - what; *parikalpyāḥ* - done.

O Devi (Goddess), can I, with steady hand, make red fragrant spots all around Your tilaka that is the best enchanting herb for Kṛṣṇa?

Explanations: In his *svarūpāveśa* Śrī Raghunātha has placed the *sindūra*-stripe on Śrīmatī's part, and now he sees himself making red spots all around Her *tilaka.* The deity of

his vision appears before him. The only way to attain *rāga bhakti* is deep sacred greed, and Śrī Raghunātha's heart is filled with that intense yearning. The more the *rāga bhakta* becomes filled with this great anxious devotional yearning, the more he forgets about his body and his home and the sooner the time of his attainment of his beloved deity comes near. Śrī Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī's intense yearning for his Īśvarī's *darśana* after She vanishes from him is a good subject of meditation for the neophyte devotees. The deity of Raghunātha's meditation is playing inside and outside of him. With love Tulasī sits down before Svāminī, holds Her chin with her left hand and begins to make fragrant red spots around Her *tilaka* with full concentration. How deeply she concentrates can be seen on her eyes, her face and her hands. The practising devotee should mentally sit next to her to learn such expertise from her! The Gosvāmīs are the *gurus* of the Yugala-*sevā*, and the greatest aspiration of the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas is to follow in their footsteps.

priya sahacarī saṅge, sevana koribo raṅge,
aṅge veśa koribeka sādhe
rākho ei sevā kāje, nija pada paṅkaje
priya sahacarī-gaṇa mājhe

"I will blissfully serve with the *priya sakhīs*, dressing Their limbs nicely. Keep me at Your lotus feet for this devotional service, amidst Your beloved girlfriends."

sugandhi candana, maṇimaya ābharaṇa,
kauṣika vasana nānā raṅge
ei sab sevā yāra, dāsī yeno hao tāra,
anukṣaṇa thāki tāra saṅge.

"I always stay with the *sakhīs* as if I am their maidservant, playfully serving the Divine Couple in different ways with fragrant sandalwoodpulp, jewelled ornaments and silken garments." Full surrender to the *sakhīs* will take the one-pointed devotee along to the kingdom of love and bless him with the gift of their company and the association of the Yugala Kiśora. Śrīla Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura sings: *vrajapura vanitāra, caraṇa āśraya sāra, koro mana ekānta koriyā* (Prema Bhakti Candrikā): "Fix Your mind on the girls of Vraja and take shelter of their lotus feet." In *sādhakāveśa* the devotees also anxiously pray at the *sakhīs*' lotus feet (in their *sādhaka-rūpa* as the Gosvāmīs, Ed.): *kāhā mora svarūpa rūpa kāhā sanātana; kāhā dāsa raghunātha patita pāvana* "Where are my Svarūpa Dāmodara, and where are my Rūpa and Sanātana? Where is Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī, the saviour of the fallen?" These anxious prayers will cause their mercy to descend in the form of the full relish of the sweetness of the Yugala Kiśora.

When Śrī Raghunātha says "O Devi!", he means "O Līlāmayi!", which means 'O playful girl!' "These red spots are a great medicinal herb for Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Your Kṛṣṇa will go crazy when He sees You dressed in this way! He will go crazy while playing with You, and that play will be unhindered. Many people (other *gopīs* in this case) use occult methods and incantations of enchantment, therefore we will give him this herb that will drive Him crazy! It will remove all obstacles and nobody else will be able to attract Him!"[73]

Blessed is this maidservant, who enchants Śrīmatī in such a way, immersing Her into an ocean of bliss! Śrī Jīva Gosvāmī explains the name Kṛṣṇa as follows in his commentary on Brahma Saṁhitā: *tad evaṁ svarūpa gunābhyāṁ parama bṛhattamaḥ sarvākarṣaka ānandaḥ Kṛṣṇa śabda vācya iti jñeyam. sa ca śabdaḥ devakī-nandana eva rūḍhah. asyaiva sarvānandakatvaṁ vāsudevopaniṣadi dṛṣṭam 'devakīnandano nikhilam ānandayet iti. ānanda mātram avikāram ananya*

[73] Note by Śrī Ānanda Gopāla Gosvāmī.

siddham. "He who is attracting everyone's hearts with His form and qualities and gives the greatest transcendental bliss is called Kṛṣṇa. Another, more conventional meaning of the name Kṛṣṇa is Śrī Devakī-nandana (the son of Devakī or Yaśodā, since Devakī is another name for mother Yaśodā of Vraja). The Vāsudeva-Upaniṣad declares His all-blissful nature by saying: "Devakī-nandana delights the world. That delight is purely transcendental and is exclusively perfect in Śrī Kṛṣṇa, in other words, it cannot be found in any other form of God". Only love can awaken waves of desire in this pure ocean of transcendental bliss. Śrī Rādhārāṇī is the personification of complete, condensed *prema-rasa*. She is the quintessence of love of God called *mahā bhāva*, and it is this *mahā-bhāva* which serves as an intoxicating herb for Kṛṣṇa. Whatever falls into an ocean of nectar becomes immortal and nectarean, and similarly the spots that are made on Śrī Rādhikā's forehead, which is an ocean of nectarean *mahā-bhāva* become a great enchanting herb for Kṛṣṇa. Tulasī is the teacher of love for the Yugala Kiśora, and she thinks: "These spots will make sure that Kṛṣṇa will not be attracted to any other girl! All these obstacles will be crossed over and You will be able to meet Him freely!" Although Rādhikā's chief rival Candrāvalī also has *mahā bhāva* for Kṛṣṇa, Tulasī is always proudly aware of the fact that her mistress Rādhā can attract Him more with Her strong feeling of possessiveness. Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī writes (Utkalikā Vallari 60):

aghahara balīvardaḥ preyān nas tava yo vraje
vṛṣabha vapuṣā daityenāsau balād abhiyujyate
iti kila mṛṣā gīrbhiś candrāvalī nilaya sthitaṁ
vanabhuvi kadā neṣyāmi tvāṁ mukunda mad īsvarīm

In the morning Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa meet shortly in Kṛṣṇa's abode Nandīśvara, and Their full meeting takes place at noontime at Śrī Rādhākuṇḍa. On the pretext of going out to worship the Sun-god Śrī Rādhikā and Her *sakhīs* eagerly rush out to the bank of Śrī Rādhākuṇḍa to meet Kṛṣṇa. But where is this Śyāma? Śrīmatī's heart is squashed! Śrī Rūpa Mañjarī sees how anxious Īśvarī is and goes out to search for Śyāma. She looks here and there, but she cannot find Śyāma anywhere, so finally she has a look in Sakhīsthali, the village of Candrāvalī, Rādhikā's chief rival, and there she finds Śyāma, sitting in Candrāvalī's *kuñja*. Suddenly Śrī Rūpa Mañjarī enters into that *kuñja* and says with terrified voice: "O Aghahara! A demon has come to Vraja in the form of a bull and is harrassing Your dear young bull! Quickly come and help!" Rasika Śiromani Śrī Kṛṣṇa understands from the word 'Aghahara' (destroyer of Aghāsura) that Svāminī is swallowed by the demon of separation from Him and that only He can destroy that fiery demon with the soothing moonlight of His smile (that's why He is again called Mukunda, the saviour). He tells Candrāvalī: "Dearest One! Excuse Me, duty calls! Just forget about it for today! When I kill this demon all the people will come out to see Me, and how can I secretly come back to you then?" Candrāvalī is naive, she's not so clever, so she says: "Yes, go, dearest One!" Then Kṛṣṇa quickly leaves Candrāvalī's *kuñja* with Śrī Rūpa Mañjarī. Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī prays: "O Mukunda! When will I use these false words to take You out of Candrāvalī's *kuñja* and bring You into the *kuñja* of My Īśvarī (Rādhikā) in the forest?"

Tulasī is absorbed in her service, thinking: "These are not red spots, they are an aphrodisiac for driving Śyāma crazy! He's a womanizer, just once show Him Your face very clearly!"

The sensitive practising devotees should fix their minds on such scenes. *Smaraṇa* means mental association. If we can not meet Śrī Rādhikā directly, then what obstacle will there be to speaking with Her in the mind? Mental service will make Her most happy, therefore the devotees are always absorbed in the Vraja-pastimes and blissfully have direct mental association with Śrī Rādhikā. Svāminī is very much afraid that some other girl may snatch Her Prāṇa Śyāma away from Her, and to remove that fear Tulasī places these fragrant

red spots around Her *tilaka*.[74] Tulasī keeps her hand steady as she makes the dots with great expertise, understanding Svāminī's anxious feelings. This heart-pouring service cannot be rendered by anyone else but Rādhā's maidservant. No one else knows how to render such services! Therefore the Mahājanas have said:

tvat prema sevanam aho puruṣārtha ratnam śāstraṁ vicārya viduṣāṁ ca mataṁ viloke
jānan mudā madana mohana mugdha rūpe dāsī bhavāni vṛṣabhānu kumārike te

"O daughter of Vṛṣābhanu! I know from studying the scriptures and hearing the sages that Your service is the jewel of all human goals of life! Therefore, O You whose form enchants even the enchanter of Cupid, I blissfully became Your maidservant!"

And so the succession of Tulasī's devotional services, that center around awakening relish of Kṛṣṇa's remembrance within Svāminī's heart, continues. The sensitive devotee should anxiously think: "If I cannot render this service, let me then at least get all the ingredients, let me at least see Your service being performed! Will I not be blessed in this way?" From such thinking the experience of the Yugala-*rasa* will come. *rūpa raghunātha pade hobe ākūti; kobe hām bujhabo sei yugala prīti* "When will I understand the love of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa by becoming eager to be like Rūpa and Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī?" The worship of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa is the worship of love, and Śrī Rādhikā embodies that love. *prema* means intense yearning for the beloved, and until the beloved is directly attained that yearning will simply increase. *hema tanu gaurī rāi, āṅkhi daraśana cāi, rodana koribo abhilāṣa* (Prema Bhakti Candrikā) "My ears want to see golden-limbed Rāi and I cry for want of Her." Tulasī says: "Your Śyāma will go crazy when He sees these spots. Show Your face to Him and, if there is any opportunity inbetween, then cast a slight merciful glance upon this fallen maidservant!"[75] Suddenly the vision stops and Śrī Raghunātha cries out in prayer:

he devi! kobe tava hoibe karuṇa!
aruṇa sugandhi rase, tilakera cāri pāśe,
bindu sob koribo racanā
sutīvra sambhrama bhore, dhīra sunipuna kore,
kalpanā koribo manohara
mādaka auṣadhi prāya, heri tāra suṣamāya,
unmatta hoibe vaṁśīdhara

"O Devi! When will I achieve Your grace? When can I make fragrant red spots all around Your *tilaka*? Extremely respectfully and with steady and expert hand I will make these captivating spots that are like an aphrodisiac. When Vaṁśīdhara (Kṛṣṇa, the holder of the flute) sees their beauty He will go mad!"

.

VERSE 27:

GOṢṬHENDRA PUTRA MADA CITTA KARĪNDRA RĀJA-
BANDHĀYA PUṢPA-DHANUṢAḤ KILA BANDHA RAJJOḤ
KIṀ KARṆAYOS TAVA VARORU VARĀVATAṀSA
YUGMENA BHŪṢAṆAM AHAṀ SUKHITĀ KARIṢYE

[74] From 'These spots..." down to here the explanation is by Śrī Ānanda Gopāla Gosvāmī.

[75] This last paragraph is narrated by Śrī Ānanda Gopāla Gosvāmī.

goṣṭhendra - the king of Vraja; *putra* - son; *mada* - intoxicated; *citta* - heart; *karīndra* - king of elephants; *rāja* - king; *bandhāya* - for binding up; *puṣpa-dhanuṣaḥ* - by Cupid, the flower-archer; *kila* - surely; *bandha* - binding; *rajjoḥ* - the rope; *kiṁ* - what; *karṇayoḥ* - both ears; *tava* - Your; *vara* - nice; *uru* - thighs; *vara* - excellent; *avataṁsa* - earrings; *yugmena* - by a pair; *bhūṣaṇam* - ornament; *ahaṁ* - I; *sukhitā* - happy girl; *kariṣye* - will do.

O Varoru (nicely-thighed girl)! Your excellent earrings are like ropes that the flower-archer Cupid has placed to bind the mad elephant king of the prince of Vraja's heart! Can this happy girl hang these ornaments on Your ears?

Explanations: Śrī Raghunātha dāsa, who suffers separation from his beloved deity, experiences the gradual service of the embodiment of *mahā bhāva*. After *tilaka* and *śṛṅgāra* he puts on Her earrings in this verse. It is the nature of *mahā bhāva* to make Kṛṣṇa happy by playing with Him. Only *mahā bhāva* contains all the ingredients to awaken Vrajarāja-nandana Kṛṣṇa's desires for *śṛṅgāra rasa* and to fulfill these desires as well. *sei mahā bhāva cintāmaṇi sāra; Kṛṣṇa vāñchā pūrṇa kore ei kārya yāra* (C.C.) "This *mahā bhāva* is the quintessence of the Cintāmaṇi-jewel of love, whose only duty is to fulfill Kṛṣṇa's desires." Therefore this *rasika kiṅkarī* immerses Mahā-bhāvamayī in an ocean of bliss by speaking ever-so-sweet Kṛṣṇa-*kathā* to Her. "Do You know what Vraja-rāja-nandana's heart is like? Like the maddened king of elephants!" A relishable thing can be understood in two ways: in the *tattva*-way and in the *rasa*-way, or the way of truth and the way of flavour. Take a *rasagolla* (sweet-ball). To know how the *rasagolla* is made and what ingredients are required to make it is the *tattva*-way of understanding it, and to place it on the tongue and actually taste it is the *rasa*-way of understanding it. Without placing the *rasagolla* on the tongue its taste cannot be known and relished. In the same way God is our relishable object. This prince of Vraja is Himself the full manifestation of non-dual truth, the abode of full opulence and sweetness, and transcendental relish personified (the Upaniṣads therefore call Him *raso vai saḥ* - 'He is taste'). All the sensual pleasure of the world is just the reflection of a single drop from the ocean of the Lord's endless transcendental bliss, and only pure selfless love can make waves of desire in this ocean of bliss. Nothing else but the ropes of pure selfless love can bind down this freely enjoying, mad elephant-like prince. That is the *tattva*-point of view, but from the *rasika* point of view He is always sporting with Śrī Rādhārāṇī and the *gopīs* of Vraja. He is Himself not the king of Vraja, He's just the prince (*goṣṭhendra putra*). He doesn't have to worry about maintaining the kingdom, He is the careless Dhīra Lalita hero who is freely enjoying Himself in the *kuñjas* of Vraja! But Cupid has placed some ropes, in the form of Śrī Rādhikā's ears (representing Her pure love), as a trap to catch this intoxicated mad elephant king. Tulasī says: "Your ears are naturally enchanting Kṛṣṇa with their beauty, and now I've even hung these earrings on them! Now this mad elephant will always remain under Your control and will freely play with You!" What a wonderful passionate love for Kṛṣṇa Tulasī incites in Rādhikā's mind in this way! How wonderfully that shines on the face of Kṛṣṇānurāginī Rādhikā! To see Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa one must understand Their deep passionate love for Each other (with the ointment of *anurāga*). Śyāmasundara is the beloved of *anurāginī* Svāminī. That's to be experienced in Their names, *mantras* and *gāyatrī*. (The sweetness of all this becomes revealed through the *sādhaka's anurāga*). A devotee who is fixed in *smaraṇa* should take special care of that. Śrī Rādhikā

enters into Nandīśvara-town in the morning to cook for Kṛṣṇa and Śyāma is already standing by the town-gate to watch Her passing by. The *sakhīs* show Her: "Hey look, there by the town gate is Śyāmasundara!" As soon as Svāminī hears this She naughtily pulls Her veil in such a way that Her face and some of Her other limbs become slightly exposed. The thorns of Vraja are also servants of Śrī-Śrī Rādhā-Mādhava. Śrīmatī steps into one such a thorn and a maidservant helps Her by pulling it out of Her foot again. Svāminī uses this opportunity to look at Śyāmasundara once and to show Him Her face. All this is done for Kṛṣṇa's pleasure only, therefore there is so much *anurāga*. Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī gives an example of that *rāga*:

tīvrārka dyuti dīpitair asilatādhārā karālāsribhir
mārtaṇḍopala maṇḍalaiḥ stha puṭite'py adres taṭe tasthuṣī
paśyantī paśupendra-nandanam asāv indīvarair āstṛte
talpe nyasta padāmbujeva muditā na spandate rādhikā

(Ujjvala Nīlamaṇi, Sthāyibhāva 127)

Seeing Śrī Rādhā from afar, Lalitā tells her *sakhīs*: "O *sakhīs*! Look, look! Śrī Rādhikā keeps Her lotuslike feet on top of the sunstones that are as sharp as swords and that have become as hot as fire because of the mid-summersun shining on it, but to Her they feel as soft as a bed of blue lotus flowers, because She feels very happy by seeing the prince of cowherders (Kṛṣṇa) standing on that mountain! Thus She does not budge an inch!" That is the nature of *rāga*! When one experiences that *rāga* as everfresh, then it is called *anurāga*. Although Śyāma sees Śrīmatī, who had come to cook for Him, at the town-gate, Śyāma thinks: "I don't know how sweet She will look in the kitchen!" When Svāminī stands in the kitchen Her clothes and ornaments are dishevelled and She has no veil on Her head. Śyāma quietly peeks through the window, having given the maidservants a hint beforehand not to say anything. But Svāminī soon notices that Śyāma is watching Her, so She pulls Her veil over Her head and rebukes Her maidservants. That also looks very sweet! Śyāma thinks to Himself: "I've never seen You so beautiful before!" This is the nature of *anurāga*. In this way Kṛṣṇa's mother, father, friends and servants also all nourish the sweet *rasa* of Rādhā and Mādhava's pastimes. All of them are required for Kṛṣṇa's sweet pastimes with Śrī Rādhā!

Tulasī hangs the earrings, that enchant even mind-enchanting Kṛṣṇa, on Svāminī's ears. When Tulasī hangs the earrings she notices that the earrings illuminate Rādhikā's golden mirror-like cheeks and the cheeks illuminate Her earrings. Tulasī slightly smiles and says: "Śyāma's mind is like a mad elephant that will be completely subdued by You!"[76] The beauty of Śrī Rādhikā's cheeks and earrings is described in detail in Govinda Līlāmṛta (11.94):

rādhāyā jita hema darpaṇa madaṁ gaṇḍa-dvayaṁ sundaram
lāvāṇyāmṛta pūrṇitam hi kanaka kṣauṇyāṁ saro-yugmakam
yat tāṭaṅka suvarṇa padma kalikaṁ kasturikā citra sac
chaibālaṁ makarī vilāsa balitaṁ kṛṣṇāti tṛṣṇā-haram

"Śrī Rādhā's cheeks defeat the lustre of golden mirrors, and they are like two ponds full of nectarean elegance in golden soil. There are two golden lotusbuds hanging on them from Her ears (Her earrings), they are covered with moss (the musk-pictures that Her maidservants have drawn on Her cheeks) and Makaris Capricorns (aquatic beings, or Her earrings) are playing in them. Therefore these cheeks naturally quench Kṛṣṇa's (erotic) thirst." *tṛṣita cāṭaka janu jaladhare milalo, bhukhilo cakora caru cāṅde* "He feels like a thirsty Cātaka-bird meeting a monsoon cloud or like a hungry Cakora-bird meeting the beautiful moon."

[76] This point is made by Śrīla Ānanda Gopāla Gosvāmī.

Tulasī calls Svāminī 'Varoru', or the girl with the best thighs, here. What does the sweetness of the earrings have to do with Her thighs? What is the relationship of the mad elephant Kṛṣṇa with these excellent thighs? That is also explained in Govinda Līlāmṛta (11.56):

asyā miṣāt prasṛtayor madanāya haimālāna dvayaḥ vidhir adād amunārthitaḥ kiṁ
yat Kṛṣṇacitta madamatta gajaṁ sa cāsmin tanmādhurī sudṛḍha śṛṅkhalayā babandha

"Has the Creator given Cupid, upon being asked for, Rādhikā's thighs, that are like golden posts for tying up elephants? These posts have now tightly bound down Kṛṣṇa's mad elephant-like mind with the chain of their sweet beauty." Only Kṛṣṇa can directly experience how excellent these thighs are! Through the address Varoru we must understand that earrings are oscillating on Rādhā's ears. When Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa dance the Rāsa Svāminī's dance attracts Śyāma's eyes. How sweetly Svāminī's locks are swinging on Her thighs with the rhythm of the music! Svāminī's dancing attracts Śyāmasundara, and He rewards Her with kisses on Her cheeks and Her thighs. That's when He enjoys both the earrings and the nice thighs. Śrī Rādhikā's maidservants understand all this, the Divine Couple cannot hide anything from them! Tulasī serves Svāminī by letting Her understand what is on Śyāmasundara's mind. No-one else but the *kiṅkarīs* can serve like that! This is the supreme goal of the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas in the age of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu! All this can be understood by following in the footsteps of Rūpa and Tulasī Mañjarī.

Svāminī asks Tulasī: "If My ears are anyway so beautiful, then why do you bother hanging earrings on them?" Tulasī says: "You are that Varoru (nicely-thighed girl)!" Svāminī slightly smiles and says: "Tulasi! Have You remembered all this (the explanation of *varoru* given above)?" Tulasī says: "Simply by serving You even a little, I was able to remember all this!"[77]

Śrī Rasika-Candra Dāsa sings:

ayi Kṛṣṇa manohara varoru śālini!
jaga mājhe anupama, kandarpa bandhana dāma,
tava śruta yuga vilāsinī

"O nicely-thighed girl! O enchantress of Kṛṣṇa! Your playful ears are like Cupid's binding-ropes, that find no match in this world"

vrajendra nandana hari, tāra citta mada karī,
bandhana koroye anāyāse.
se cāru śravaṇa dvaye, kobe sukhānvita hoiyā,
porāibo vara avataṁsa

"The mind of Hari, the prince of Vraja, is like a lusty elephant that is easily caught with these two beautiful ears. When can I blissfully hang the best ornaments on them?"

.

VERSE 28:

YĀ TE KAÑCULIR ATRA SUNDARI MAYĀ VAKṢOJAYOR ARPITĀ
ŚYĀMĀCCHĀDANA KĀMYAYĀ KILA NA SĀ SATYETI VIJÑĀYATĀM
KINTU SVĀMINI KṚṢṆA EVA SAHASĀ TAT TĀM AVĀPYA SVAYAṀ
PRĀṆEBHYO'PY ADHIKAṀ SVAKAṀ NIDHI-YUGAṀ SAṄGOPAYATY EVA HI

[77] Explanation in the last two paragraphs by Śrī Ānanda Gopāla Gosvāmī.

yā - which; *te* - Your; *kañculiḥ* - blouse; *atra* - here; *sundari* - beautiful girl!; *mayā* - by me; *vakṣojayoḥ* -on the breasts; *arpitā* - placed; *śyāma* - Kṛṣṇa; *acchādana* - covered; *kāmyayā* - desiring; *kila* - surely; *na* - not; *sā* - that (blouse); *satya* - true; *iti* - this; *vijñāyatām* - to be known; *kintu* - but; *svāmini* - O mistress; *Kṛṣṇa* - Kṛṣṇa; *eva* - only; *sahasā* - suddenly; *tat* - that; *tām* - that; *avāpya* - attained; *svayaṁ* - himself; *prāṇebhyaḥ* - than life; *api* - even; *adhikaṁ* - more; *svakaṁ* - his own; *nidhi* - jewel; *yugaṁ* - pair; *saṅgopayati* - hides; *eva* - surely; *hi* - certainly.

O Sundari (beautiful girl)! I did not desire that Śyāma would not see Your breasts when I placed this kañculī (bodice) on them, but, O Svāmini (mistress), I wanted Him to suddenly come to cover (hide) Your jewellike breasts, that are dearer to Him than His very life, and to become Your blouse Himself by firmly embracing You.

Explanations: The earrings are hung and now Tulasī must put on Svāminī's bodice. "Svāmini! I did not put this Śyāma-colored bodice on You to cover Your breasts - I put it on so that Śyāma will suddenly come and cover Your breasts Himself, thereby serving as Your real, best-fitting blouse!" This expertise in service must be learned from the eternal maidservants, as Śrīla Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura has taught:

ei sab anugā hoiyā; prema sevā nibo cāiyā;
iṅgite bujhibo sab kāja.
rūpe guṇe ḍagamagi, sadā hobo anurāgī,
vasati koribo sakhī mājha

"I will lovingly serve, following in the footsteps of all the *mañjarīs* and understanding what are my duties on their mere indications. I will always be very attached to Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa's forms and qualities and stay among the *sakhīs*!" These eternally perfect maidservants are also very eager to teach others. Although no one reveals his experiences in *bhajana* they have revealed their experiences by recording them in their books!

Tulasī must serve Svāminī while She suffers separation from Her Priyatama. Simply on seeing the blackish blouse Śrīmatī becomes startled by the remembrance of Kṛṣṇa, but Tulasī consoles Her by making Her relish the Śyāma-*rasa* (the spiritual flavour of Kṛṣṇa). "O Sundari!", she says, "a bluish *kañculī* (bodice) would look splendid on a golden bosom, but I did not desire to cover these breasts! I just wanted to create a wonderful beauty at that time!" Tulasī is not at all shy to call Svāminī Sundari. Does a maidservant speak like that? The service is situated in sweetness By chattering in this way Tulasī fills Svāminī's mind with memories of Her past sports with Her Priyatama. During each service, which belong to the *madhura rasa*-category, she gives Sundarī the relish of Śrī Kṛṣṇa-*rasa*. Blessed is this maidservant! Blessed is her service!

Also during the stage of *sādhana* there must be relish according to one's own *rasa* at the time of meditation. This relish according to one's relationship (with the deity) arises while identifying oneself with one's *svarūpa.* Taking shelter of the lotus feet of Śrī Guru will remain fruitless if this relationship with the deity is not established.[78]

[78] These paragraphs of the explanation are by Śrī Ānanda Gopāla Gosvāmī.

mañjarī bhāva means to have your mind completely reflect the picture of Śrīmatī's moods and feelings. It is not easy to reflect Śrīmatī's *bhāva citra* (pictures of Her feelings) completely. She is the embodiment of the full *mādanākhya mahā-bhāva*, and on top of that She is completely mad with attraction to the form, qualities and pastimes of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, who embodies the transcendental erotic *śṛṅgāra rasa*. There is nothing in the spiritual world as pure as this *śṛṅgāra rasa* or *śuci rasa*. By associating with like-minded and more advanced saints and by gaining their grace these feelings and flavours will gradually be experienced, but the heart must be prepared for this *rasa-saṁskāra* by giving up all material customs. The *svarūpa* I came to know through Śrī Guru's grace must be brought to full realisation by giving up the service of *māyā*, which consists of identification with the material body.

ātmānaṁ cintayet tatra tāsāṁ madhye manoramāṁ
rūpa yauvana sampannāṁ kiśorīṁ pramadākṛtiṁ
sakhīnāṁ saṅginī rūpām ātmānaṁ vāsanāmayīm
ājñā sevāparāṁ tadvat ratnālaṅkāra bhūṣitām

(Śrī Sanat Kumāra Saṁhitā)

"A practising devotee should think himself to be amongst them (the other *gopīs*), as an enchanting beautiful young adolescent female. As a female associate of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa's girlfriends such as Śrī Lalitā, Viśākhā and Śrī Rūpa Mañjarī she is dedicated to the services that are ordered to her and her *vāsanāmayī mūrti* (form consisting of divine desires) is decorated with jewelled ornaments (that are given to her by Śrī Rādhā as remnants). The word *cintayet* means that one should see and face one's spiritual self as having a special form and feeling, like the *nitya siddha mañjarīs*."

This *siddha deha* is automatically manifest in the heart of a *jāta rati sādhaka* (a devotee whose *bhāva bhakti* has arisen). It is as if he forgets his *sādhaka deha* (external devotee-body). The *sādhakas* whose *rati* has not yet arisen will conceive of this *siddha deha* within the mind. The stronger and clearer this meditation on the *siddha deha* becomes, the further the *sādhaka* advances into the kingdom of *bhāva*.[79]

Why hesitate to meditate on Rādhārāṇī's breasts? They must be meditated upon in a blissful state of mind. When the heart is not pure this *sevā* cannot be contemplated. When bodily consciousness is strong one has no right to meditate on these intimate pastimes - this is the opinion of Śrī Jīva. Śrī Śuka Muni has said: "Anyone who faithfully hears and chants about the pastimes of Śrī-Śrī Rādhā-Mādhava will swiftly attain the topmost *prema bhakti* in the mood of the *gopīs* and will become grave, having given up heart's diseases like lust. (see the final verse of the Rāsa-*līlā,* starting with *vikrīḍitaṁ vrajavadhūbhiḥ*). Therefore, if that is so, then the qualification to worship Śrī-Śrī Rādhā-Mādhava will be accomplished through the process of hearing and chanting these pastimes. The great words of the *ācāryas* are the support for the weak *sādhakas*. These words are very powerful and they will scent the hearts of the fortunate devotee with the desire for Śrīmatī's devotional service, like a powerful *mantra*.[80]

mahatera bhāva bhāvite bhāvite, tad-bhāve hobe sarva vismaraṇa
antar bāhye tabe ekākāra hobe, mahad bhāve rasa hobe āsvādana

"When we attain the ecstatic mood of the great devotional teachers we will forget everything. The internal and the external will then assume one form. In the mood of the great souls we will relish transcendental flavours."

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[79] Śrī Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja's Sāraṅga Raṅgada commentary on Bilvamaṅgala's Kṛṣṇa Karṇāmṛta,verse 3.

[80] The explanation of the last paragraph is by Śrī Ānanda Gopāla Gosvāmī.

Śrī Raghunātha dāsa maintained his renunciation because he remembered the pastimes of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa. Just as a chaste wife loses all taste for sense-gratification when she is separated from her beloved husband, being completely absorbed in thinking about him, similarly Śrī Raghunātha dāsa is always absorbed in remembering Śrī Rādhā's lotus feet when he feels separation from Her, and thus he has lost all appetite for sense-gratification. The sweetness of Śrīmatī's form, qualities, and pastimes stole his mind and made it totally absorbed in Her. He personally sang:

candra-vadani dhani mṛga nayanī
rūpe guṇe anupama ramaṇī maṇī
madhurima hāsini, kamala vikāśini,
motima hāriṇi kambu-kaṇṭhinī
thira saudāmini, galita kāñcana jini
tanu ruci dhāriṇi pika vacanī

"The face of this fortunate girl shines like the moon and Her eyes are like those of a deer. The qualities and form of this jewel of ladies is incomparable! Her sweet smile makes the lotuses bloom, She wears a pearl necklace and Her neck is as fair as a conchshell. She resembles a steady lightning-strike, Her bodily lustre defeats that of molten gold and Her voice is sweeter than that of the cuckoos."

uraja lambita veṇi, meru pore yeno phaṇi
ābharaṇa bahu maṇi gaja gamanī.
vīṇā parivādini, caraṇe nūpura dhvani,
rati rase pulakini jaga mohinī
siṁha jini mājha-khini, tā'he maṇi kiṅkiṇi
jhāṁpi oḍhani tanu pada avanī
vṛṣabhānu nandini, jaga jana vandini,
dāsa raghunātha pahuṁ manohārinī

"Her braid hangs over Her breasts like a snake hanging over the golden Meru-mountain. She is decorated with many jewels and walks with the charming gait of an elephant. She plays the Vīṇā, Her anklebells jingle sweetly, She has goosepimples on Her skin when She relishes the *rati rasa* (erotic mellow) and She enchants the world. Her waist is more slender than that of a lion's and on it She wears a jewelled belt. Her veil touches the earth. Vṛṣabhānu Mahārāja's daughter is praised by the people of the world and She enchants the mind of Raghunātha Dāsa."

He always desires to relish the sweetness of the devotional service, pastimes, forms and attributes of the Yugala Kiśora, Who are the endless abode of beauty and sweetness, Śrī Vrajarāja-nandana, and the crown jewel of Vraja-girls, Śrī Rādhārāṇī. This sweet taste is so attractive that even the Lord desires to taste it together with His devotees, but in the end Mahāprabhu forbade His Bengali devotees to come to visit Him at Purī, and He stayed alone in His Gambhīrā-cell to relish the songs of Caṇḍī dāsa and Vidyāpati, the play of Rāmānanda Rāya as well as Jayadeva's Gīta Govinda and Bilvamaṅgala Ṭhākura's 'Kṛṣṇa Karnāmṛta' in the company of Śrīla Rāmānanda Rāya and Śrīpāda Svarūpa Dāmodara. Anyone whose heart is drawn towards Śrī Rādhārāṇī is most fortunate! Śrīpāda Prabodhānanda Sarasvatī has written: "The lustre of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī's jewellike toenails will swiftly arise in the heart of anyone who loves Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu."[81] Śrīla Narottama Dāsa Ṭhākura has sung: *gaura prema rasārṇave, se taraṅge yebā ḍube, se rādhā mādhava antaraṅga* "Anyone who dives into the ocean

[81] Śrī Caitanya Candrāmṛtam, 88.

of divine love and flavour of Lord Gaura, becomes an intimate associate of Śrī-Śrī-Rādhā-Mādhava!" The *sādhaka* should aspire: "If I should attain anything, it should be Śrī Rādhikā's devotional service!" This is the *dhruva tārā* (pole-star or guiding light) for the *sādhakas*: "I have to become Śrī Rādhā's *dāsī*!"

Tulasī calls Svāminī Sundari, or beautiful girl. When Līlāśuka (Bilvamaṅgala Ṭhākura) described the sweetness of Śyāmasundara's form he said: *nīrājana kramadhurāṁ bhavad ānanendor nirvyājam arhati cirāya śaśi-pradīpaḥ* (Kṛṣṇa Karṇāmṛta–98): "O Kṛṣṇa! The moon can never become qualified to be compared to Your face! This moon (camphor)-lamp has just become qualified enough to be used in the *ārati*-worship of Your face!" The purport of this verse is: "Just as the burnt-out wick is cast away after it was used in the *ārati*-ceremony, the moon can be thrown away after having been used as a lamp in the *ārati*-ceremony that worships Your face!" But even this endlessly sweet Śrī Govinda becomes mad after relishing even one drop of Śrī Rādhikā's sweet form! Just as Bilvamaṅgala wants to throw the moon away Tulasī wants to throw Rādhikā's bodice away, thinking it to be unfit to serve Her. But, she thinks, if Her breasts are covered then Kṛṣṇa will be even more attracted to Her! Even the endlessly sweet Śrī Govinda is mad after tasting even a single drop of Her sweet form! Śrī Kṛṣṇa's *āpta-dūtī* (personal girl-messenger) told Śrī Rādhā:

dekhāyyā vayāna cāṅde, tāre - phelili viṣama phānde,
tuhu - turite āoli, lakhite nārilo,
oi oi kori kānde

"Revealing Your moonlike face You cast a dangerous net! You came so suddenly - I couldn't see what's going on! Oi, oi! I exclaim, bursting into tears!" (Kavi Rañjana)

Just to make Śrī Rādhā's naturally beautiful form bloom up Tulasī places this black bodice on Her body, that mocks the beauty of molten gold, and when she sees the wonderful sweetness of Her form welling up she says: "I did not put this bodice on Your breasts to cover them! Truly Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the bodice that will cover Your breasts! He will consider Your bodice to be unworthy, rip it open and cover Your breasts, that are as valuable to Him as millions of His own life-airs, with His own chest! If I cover Your breasts like this I will simply increase His greed for them; that's why I put this bodice on You!" Blessed is this maidservant! She serves her *sevya* by crystallizing Her favorite flavours within Her heart!

Śrī Rasika-Candra Dāsa sings:

he sundari! śuno mora nivedana!
Kṛṣṇa yeno nāhi here, ei abhilāṣa kore,
kañculī na porāi kokhon

"O beautiful girl! Hear my prayer! I never put Your blouse on with the desire that Kṛṣṇa would not see (Your breasts)!"

tomāra vakṣoja pore, saṁpibo go yatna kore,
heno kāle āsi śyāma rāya.
kañculikā unmociyā, prema pulakita hoiyā,
āliṅgana koribe tomāya.

"Just as I carefully put the blouse on Your breasts Śyāmasundara comes, opens it and embraces You with goosepimples of ecstatic love on His skin."

svayaṁ kañculikā rūpe, āvarilo stana-yuge,
prāṇāpekṣa priya-nidhi jāni.
tāi e kañculī hāy! kibā prayojana tāy?

vṛthā mora prayāsa svāmini !

"Then He personally covers Your breasts, that are like jewels that are dearer to Him than His own life, as their blouse. Then, alas ! What was the use of this blouse? O Svāmini! My efforts were wasted!"

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VERSE 29:

NĀNĀ MAṆI PRAKARA GUMPHITA CĀRU PUṢṬYĀ
MUKTĀ SRAJAS TAVA SUVAKṢASI HEMA-GAURI
ŚRĀNTYĀBHṚTĀLASA MUKUNDA SUTŪLIKĀYĀṀ
KIṀ KALPAYIṢYATITARĀṀ TAVA DĀSIKEYAM

nānā - various; *maṇi* - jewels; *prakara* - multitude; *gumphita* - strung; *cāru* - beautiful; *puṣṭyā* - increased; *muktā* - pearl; *srajaḥ* - necklace; *tava* - Your; *suvakṣasi* - nice chest; *hema gauri* - golden; *śrānti* - fatigue; *ābhṛtālasa* - resting; *mukunda* - the bestower of liberation; *su tulikāyāṁ* - on the nice cotton-like chest; *kiṁ* - what; *kalpayiṣyatitarāṁ* - will fashion; *tava* - Your; *dāsikā* - maidservant; *iyam* - this.

O Hemagauri (golden girl)! When You are tired of lovemaking You lie down on the pillow of Mukunda's chest, which is as soft as cotton. When can this maidservant decorate Your nice chest with a charming necklace of big pearls strung with different gems?

Explanations: In his *svarūpāveśa* Śrī Raghunātha dāsa serves Svāminī and says: "O Hema Gauri! (Hema Gauri means: She Who is more golden than gold) When can this fallen maidservant of Yours hang this pearl necklace, made of different jewels, on Your beautiful chest?" Tulasī sits down to hang the pearl necklace on Svāminī's beautiful chest and to enchant Her mind with her ever-so-beautiful talks about Kṛṣṇa. Apparently Tulasī has strung that necklace herself. Holding the necklace before Svāminī's eyes, Tulasī says: "This necklace is so beautiful because it was strung with different kinds of gems, and it is so dear to You because it brings the remembrance of Your beloved here!" With her prattling Tulasī draws a picture of previous pastimes on the canvas of Svāminī's heart. "Why is the necklace so dear to You? Because it enabled You to see Kṛṣṇa after You performed *sūrya pūjā* (ritual worship of the sungod), in which He dressed up like a *brāhmaṇa*-priest to perform the *pūjā* for You right in front of Your mother-in-law Jaṭilā. When Jaṭilā took You back home You purposefully broke Your pearl necklace to have another good chance to look at Kṛṣṇa while picking up the pearls, before You had to separate from Him for the rest of the day. And in the morning, when Śyāma goes out to the meadows to tend His cows, You can see Him reflected in Your pearl necklace even in front of Your superiors. How happy that makes You!" In this way Tulasī immerses Svāminī's mind in thoughts of Śyāma. The word *puṣṭyā* (increased) in the text here stands for: attracting the eyes (of both Śyāma and Svāminī). Śrīmatī experiences Her Priyatama through the jewel-string. Sometimes it is as if a dream comes true. Once during *pūrva-rāga* Prāṇeśvarī revealed the following dream to a *sakhī*:

manera marama kathā, tomāre kohiye ethā,
śuno śuno parāṇera soi!
svapane dekhiluṁ ye, śyāmala varaṇa de,
tāhā vinā āra kāru nai

"Listen, oh listen! Prāṇa *sakhi*! Now I'm revealing My heart's secret to you! In My dream I saw this Śyāmala (blackish/bluish) boy! It could not have been anyone else but Him!"

rajanī sāṅna ghana, ghana deyā garajana,
rimi jhimi śabade variṣe.
pālaṅke śayāna raṅge, vigalita cīra aṅge,
ninda yāi manera hariṣe

"In the dark night of Śrāvana (the rainy season, July-August) the clouds were thundering and the rain was pouring with a slithering sound. While resting in My bed My clothes fell away and I fell asleep in an ecstatic mood."

śikhare śikhaṇḍa rola, matta dādurī bola,
kokila kuhare kutūhole.
jhiṅjhā jhiniki bāje, dāhuka se ghana gāje,
svapana dekhiluṁ heno kāle

"The peacocks call from the mountain-peaks and the female frogs and cuckoos are calling in their intoxicating pitch. As the Dāhuka-bird (galluline) calls like the *jhiṅjhā-jhiniki*-sound of the *mṛdaṅgas* (or the crickets) I saw Him in My dream!"

nayane paiṭhalo seho, marame lāgalo neho,
śravaṇe bharalo sei vāṇī
heriyā tāhāra rīta, ye kore dāruna cita,
dhik rahu kulera kāminī

"Seeing His behaviour My mind couldn't resist, and My ears filled with His sweet words! Cursed are these hard-hearted housewives who hold onto their chastity after seeing His behaviour!"

rūpe guṇe rasa-sindhu, mukha chaṭā jini indu,
mālatīra mālā gale dole
bosi mora padatale, pāye hāta dei chale,
āmā kino, vikāilu bole

"His form and His attributes are like an ocean of nectar and His face defeats the splendor of the moon. A garland of Mālatī-flowers dangles from His neck. Sitting at My footsoles He tries to touch My feet with His hands, saying: "Purchase Me! I've sold Myself to You!"

kibā se bhurūra bhaṅga, bhūṣaṇera bhūṣaṇa aṅga,
kāma mohe nayānera koṇe.
hāsi hāsi kothā koy, parāṇa kāḍiyā loy,
bhulāite koto raṅga jāne

"How beautifully He plays with His eyebrows! His body ornaments its own ornaments, and the corners of His eyes enchant even Cupid! He smiles and laughs as He speaks and with that He snatches away My heart, making Me forget whatever I know in such a playful way!"

rasāveśe dei kola, mukhe nā niḥsare bola,
adhare adhara paraśilo.
aṅga avaśa bhelo, lāja bhaya māna gelo,
jñāna dāsa bhāvite lāgilo

"In a *rasika āveśa* (absorption) I take Him on My lap, not saying anything when Our lips touch. Jñāna dāsa thinks: "All shame, fear and pride have gone when They touched Each other."[82]

In some way it is even more attractive to Them to see Each other through the pearls than to see Each other directly, the sensitive intelligent *rasikas* will understand this. Therefore it will cause pain and misery to call this experience false. In the same way visions of such pastimes are never thought of as false. How sweet is Svāminī's remembrance of all this! One day Paurṇamāsī-devī tested Rādhikā's love by telling Her: "O Rādhe! You are famous all over Vraja as a chaste girl, but now I hear that You have become attached to Śrī Kṛṣṇa!" Svāminī says: "O holy mother! This Śyāma-person is a shameless rascal who doesn't want to leave Me alone! Wherever I go He stretches out His arms and stands before Me to stop Me! He won't leave Me even if I beat Him with My ear-decorating lotus flowers! When I scream He covers My mouth with His leaf-like hands and when I fall at His feet and beg forgiveness from Him He bites My lips! Who can restrain Him in any way, tell Me?"[83] All this is the relish of a vision. All of Svāminī's senses are absorbed in relishing the Śyāma-*rasa*, whether it be in dreams, during *smaraṇa* or during visions. Therefore Śrīmatī often laments as follows:

yoto nivāriye cita nivāra nā yāya; āna pathe dhāi pada kānu pathe dhāya
e chāra rasanā mora hoilo ki vāma; yāra nāma nā loibo loya tāra nāma
e chāra nāsikā mui yoto koru bandha; tabu to dāruna nāsā pāya śyāma gandhe
yāra kathā nā śunibo kori anumāna; parasaṅga śunite āpani yāya kāna
dhik rahu e chāra indriya-gaṇa sab; sadā se kāliyā kānu hoy anubhava
caṇḍī dāsa kohe rāi bhālo bhāve ācho; manera marama kathā kāre jāni pucho

"No matter how much I try to control My mind, it cannot be controlled. If I run down another path Kānu also runs there. Have I lost control over this contemptible tongue? Although I do not (want to) pronounce His name it pronounces His name! No matter how much I try to block My rubbish nose, this cruel nose still catches Śyāma's fragrance. Although I try not to hear topics about Him, My ears automatically go off and listen to talks about Him! Let all My useless senses be cursed, for They always experience Kāliyā Kānu! Caṇḍī dasa says: "O Rāi! You're doing fine - just ask someone if they know what's on Your mind!"

Kṛṣṇamayī Kṛṣṇa yāra antare bāhire; yāhā yāhā netra poḍe tāhā Kṛṣṇa sphure (C.C.) "Śrī Rādhikā's name Kṛṣṇamayī means that Kṛṣṇa is within Her and without Her; wherever She casts Her glance there She perceives Kṛṣṇa." How enchanting are the rewards this Sevikā (maidservant) gets from Kṛṣṇamayī! Viśākhā teaches Tulasī how to sing lovesongs when Svāminī suddenly passes by and asks her: "O how sweet! Won't you let Me hear it?" When Tulasī dances and sweetly sings this song it is as if the subject of the song, the pastimes of Śrī-Śrī Rādhā-Mādhava, takes shape before Svāminī! How beautiful are Tulasī's dancing-gestures! Everyone is fully engrossed. Svāminī feels that She should give Tulasī a reward, so She goes up to Śyāma, unlocks one of His pearl necklaces and hangs it around Tulasī's neck. Tulasī feels blessed with such a reward, for this necklace has become very sweet by relishing the flavours of the Yugala Kiśora. Tulasī sees how this necklace dances on Svāminī's breasts during the game of *śṛṅgāra rasa.*

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[82] Padakartā Jñāna dāsa was a disciple of Mother Jāhnavā, Śrī Nityānanda's consort (C.C. Ādi 11,52). He was a life-long renunciant and wrote many *padas* in Bengali and Vraja-buli.

[83] Quoted from Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī's 'Vidagdha Mādhava Nāṭakam', Act II.

Tulasī says: "O Svāmini! I hung this necklace on Your beautiful chest! When will it look most beautiful? When it is close to Śyāmasundara! Near Him there can be nothing so beautiful. It will look most beautiful to Śyāmasundara while You dance, walk, swing and move, and in this way it will serve Him! The sweetness of this dangling necklace will madden Your Nāgara when You dance the Rāsa-dance! Your chest will be a good pillow for Mukunda's sofa-like chest when You lie on it to take rest after You became tired of Your love sports with Him!"[84] In his Prema Pūrābhidha-stotram Śrī Raghunātha dāsa says *pramada madana yuddha śrāntitaḥ kānta Kṛṣṇa pracura sukhada vakṣaḥ sphāra talpe svapanti* "O Rādhe! After You become exhausted from Your tremendous erotic battle You dream on the broad and greatly delightful chest of Your lover Kṛṣṇa!" This indicates *viparīta vilāsa*, or contrary pastimes, in which the lady takes the position of the man. But another reading of the verse can be *śrāntyābhrtālasa mukundasya sutūlikāyāṁ tava suvakṣasi* "When You are tired of love-making Mukunda finds a resting-place on Your breasts." In this case They are in an ordinary position. Why is Kṛṣṇa named 'Mukunda' in this verse? He is the bestower of freedom, freeing Svāminī from the tight bondage of Her bodice, Her underwear and Her braid. When Svāminī lies on Mukunda's chest She looks like a steady lightning strike on a dark raincloud. She cannot find a better restingplace than this! "I'm Your humble maidservant, Your unworthy maidservant, but I will hang this pearl necklace on You! I would feel succesful if I could bring Your Sundara to You after hanging this necklace on You!" It is as if Svāminī's bodily effulgence gushes out of the verse when Tulasī addresses Her with the compound word 'Hemagauri', meaning golden girl. Śrīmatī does not look at the pearl necklace, She looks at the pastimes that Tulasī describes. She cannot understand this. According to Śrīla Kavi Karṇapura Kṛṣṇa is Himself like a sapphire necklace around the *gopīs*' necks. He told this to Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu after sucking His toe when he was just seven years old:

śravaso kuvalayam akṣnor añjanam uraso mahendra-maṇi dāma
vṛndāvana tarunīnāṁ maṇḍanam akhilaṁ harir jayati

"Victory to Hari, who fully adorns the young girls of Vṛndāvana by being the sapphire necklace on their breasts, the black eyeliner around their eyes and the blue lotus flower on their ears!"

hātaka darapaṇa, māthaka phula, nayanaka añjana mukhaka tāmbūla
hṛdayaka mṛgamada gīmaka hāra; dehaka saravasa gehaka sāra
pākhīka pākha, mīnaka pāni; jīvaka jīvana hāma tuhu jāni
tuhu kaise mādhava koho tuhu moya; vidyāpati koho - duhu dohā hoy

"You are the mirror in My hand, the flower on My head, the eyeliner around My eyes and the betelleaves in My mouth! You are the musk on My breasts, the necklace around My neck and the all-in-all of My body and My house! You are to Me what the wings are to the bird, the water is for the fish, and the life is to the soul. O Mādhava! What are You not to Me?" Vidyāpati says; "In this way They belong to Each other!"[85]
Śrī Rasika-Candra dāsa sings:

viparīta krīḍā rase he kanaka gauri!
śrānta avaśa kāya, hoiben śyāma rāya,
tāra vakṣaḥ śayyāra upari

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[84] Baṅga Vihārī Vidyālaṅkāra was a disciple of Madhusūdana, a descendent from Śrīnivāsācārya. He wrote the only Sanskrit *ṭīkā* on Stavāvalī, named Kāśikā, in 1723. His commentary on this verse is: *he hemagauri vakṣa-stha svarṇābharaṇam iva gaura varṇam* "O Hemagauri! You shine on Kṛṣṇa's chest like a golden ornament!"
[85] Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī says that Svāminī's necklace is called Hari Manohara, the enchanter of the enchanting Hari (Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa Gaṇoddeśa Dīpikā).

"O golden beauty! When You play reverse pastimes Śyāma becomes exhausted and You lie down on the couch of His chest."

śobhitā ye prema khani, tomāra hṛdaya khāni,
nānā maṇi mukuṭa milaye.
gāṅthiyā sucāru hāra, loye dāsī upahāra,
dibe kobe tāhāte porāya?

"Your heart is like a mine with jewels of love! When can this maidservant string a beautiful necklace with different jewels and pearls and offer that to You by hanging it on Your chest ?"

.

VERSE 30:

MAṆI-CAYA KHACITĀBHIR NĪLA CŪḌĀVALĪBHIR
HARI DAYITA KALĀVID DVANDVAM INDĪVARĀKṢI
API BATA TAVA DIVYAIR AṄGULĪR AṄGULĪYAIḤ
KVACID API KILA KĀLE BHŪṢAYIṢYĀMI KIṂ NU

maṇicaya - jewels; *khacitābhiḥ* - studded with; *nīla* - blue; *cūḍāvalībhiḥ* - with bangles; *hari* - of Hari; *dayita* - dear; *kalāvid* - knower of all arts; *dvandvam* - couple; *indīvara* - kind of blue lotus flower; *akṣi* - eyes (fem.); *api* - even; *bata* - o!; *tava* - Your; *divyaiḥ* - divine, beautiful, glistening; *aṅgulī* - fingers; *aṅgulīyaiḥ* - with fingerrings; *kvacid api* - at any time; *kila* - certainly; *kāle* - in time; *bhūṣayiṣyāmi* - I will decorate; *kiṁ* - what; *nu* - whether.

O Indīvarakṣi (girl with blue lotus-eyes)! Will there ever be a time when I can ornament You with blue bangles inset with many jewels? When can I adorn both Your hands, that are expert in all arts and that are very dear to Śrī Hari, with beautiful glistening rings?

Explanations: A divine stream of transcendental visions streams through Śrī Raghunātha's heart. Even those who are in the class of neophytes have some of these realizations, but Śrī Raghunātha is in the kingdom of *mahā-bhāva*. He experiences all these things in a lively and vivid way, and after experiencing this he reveals it through his prayers. Even in his external consciousness the internal consciousness twangs through, that's why his prayers are touching the heart so much! In his *svarūpāveśa* Śrī Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī, as Tulasī, puts blue bangles on Svāminī's wrists. A golden colour slightly shimmers through the blue, reminding Svāminī of Śyāma (the blue bangles) and His yellow *dhotī* (the golden colour). What a wonderful handicraft! How wonderful is also the address 'Indīvarākṣi'! Tulasī especially addresses Svāminī like this to express what She relishes within Her heart as She sees the blue bangles. All the emotions are manifest in Bhāvamayī. Her form and Her *bhāva* are one and

the same thing.[86] Caitanya Caritāmṛta says: *premera svarūpa deha prema vibhāvita; kṛṣṇera preyasī śreṣṭhā jagate vidita* "Her body consists of *prema* and is formed by *prema*, hence She is known in the world as Kṛṣṇa's beloved." From the time of *pūrva rāga*, when Rādhikā first saw Kṛṣṇa, She saw the whole world to be full of Kṛṣṇa. Therefore She told Her girlfriends:

sajani! yaba dhari pekhaluṁ kāna
taba dhari jagabhari, bharalo kusuma śara,
nayane nā heriye āna

(Govinda dāsa)

"O *sakhi*! As soon as I saw Kāna the whole world became filled with (Cupid's) flower-arrows and My eyes could not see anything else anymore."

This is the love of the embodiment of love. The poet Jayadeva describes the condition of *virahinī* Rāi in the *kuñja*. Śyāmasundara is late, and the *sakhīs* decribe Virahinī's condition to Śyāmasundara as follows:

vilikhati rahasi kuraṅga-madena bhavantam asama śara bhūtam
praṇamati makaram adho vinidhāya kare ca śaraṁ nava cūtam
pratipadam idam api nigadati mādhava tava caraṇe patitāham
tvayi vimukhe mayi sapadi sudhā-nidhir api tanute tanu dāham
dhyāna layena puraḥ parikalpya bhavantam atīva durāpam
vilapati hasati viṣīdati roditi cañcati muñcati tāpam

(Gīta Govindam)

"O Śyāma! Virahinī Rāi dwells in a lonely place and draws a form of You with musk. Taking You to be Cupid She draws a Makara-fish under Your form and offers obeisances unto You with a mangobud-arrow in the hand. Offering Her obeisances She says: "O Mādhava! I take shelter of Your lotus feet! If You reject Me even the nectarean moon is burning Me with its scorching flames! You are so rarely attained, and today I came so close to You in My meditation!" She takes the form She drew on the canvas to be Kṛṣṇa Himself, therefore She sometimes tells it about Her separation from You and cries, and sometimes She laughs, thinking You to be close by. Sometimes She is sad, thinking You to have gone away from Her, and sometimes She extinguishes the burning fire in Her heart by embracing Your form, thinking that You have come back."

In this way the embodiment of *mahā bhāva* is decorated by a qualified maidservant who makes Her relish *rasa*. Śrīmatī sees Śyāmasundara's reflection in the blue lustre of the bangles. When Tulasī sees the beauty of Svāminī's eyes she calls Her Indīvarākṣī, She whose eyes are as beautiful as blue Indīvara-lotuses. "Your eyes are naturally beautiful, but when they see Śyāma they are so much more beautiful!" In the opening verse of his Dāna Keli Kaumudī Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī prays to Śrī Rādhā's eyes, that reveal the ecstatic symptom of *kila kiñcit*, for the welfare of the world.

antaḥ smeratayojjvalā jala-kaṇa vyākīrṇa pakṣmāṅkurā
kiñcit pāṭalitāñcalā rasikatotsiktā puraḥ kuñcati
ruddhāyāḥ pathi mādhavena madhura vyābhugnatārottarā
rādhāyāḥ kila kiñcita stavakinī dṛṣṭiḥ śriyaṁ vaḥ kriyāt

[86] This paragraph is an explanation by Śrī Ānanda Gopāla Gosvāmī.

"May Śrī Rādhā's glances, that are beautified by the bouquet of the seven-fold *kila kiñcit*-ecstasy, bestow auspiciousness on you! When Kṛṣṇa stops Śrī Rādhā on the road near the Dāna Ghāṭi (at Govardhana Hill), Her eyes attain a certain shimmer because of Her slight smile of joy, Her eyelashes are covered with teardrops and the corners of Her eyes have become slightly reddish, having been sprinkled by *rasikatā* (tastiness). They have begun to shrink because She sees Kṛṣṇa standing before Her, and Her pupils have become extraordinarily beautiful as they assume a certain sweet kind of crookedness." Svāminī is fond of black things, and any kind of blue colour incites Her. As soon as any kind of blue colour comes to Her She feels as if Śyāmasundara has come before Her.[87]

Kṛṣṇaḥ pakṣo nava kuvalayaṁ Kṛṣṇa-sāras tamālo
nīlāmbhodas tava ruci-padaṁ nāma rūpaiś ca kṛṣṇā

(Rādhā Rasa Sudhānidhiḥ - 89)

"Hey Śrī Rādhe! You are fond of anything which may remind You of Śyāma through its color or name: Tamāla-trees, the new moon night, a fresh monsooncloud or blue lotus flowers!" She does not see the blue bangles, but Kṛṣṇa. She cannot understand this! *Kṛṣṇamayī - Kṛṣṇa yāra antara bahire; yāhā yāhā netra poḍe tāhā Kṛṣṇa sphure* (Caitanya Caritāmṛta Ādi 4) "Rādhikā is called Kṛṣṇamayī because Kṛṣṇa is within Her and without Her. Wherever Her glances fall, there She sees Kṛṣṇa!" She's seeing the bangles but She thinks She sees Śyāma. Tulasī sees that Svāminī's eyes, that are of the same blue colour as Kṛṣṇa is, are filled with emotion when She thinks She sees Śyāma, that's why she addresses Her as 'Indīvarakṣi', blue lotuseyed girl. When they see Kṛṣṇa, these blue eyes become even more beautiful! She does not know whether She sees Kṛṣṇa or the blue bangles! Tulasī performs *prasaṅga sevā* by reminding Svāminī of Śyāma.[88] Tulasī will now place the bangles on Svāminī's arms, that she calls *hari dayita*, Hari's beloveds. He is Rādhikā's Hari and He removes all obstacles with the savour of His own sweetness. He takes away (*haraṇa*) all Her shyness, opposition and other obstacles to Their meeting or Her savouring of His sweetness. Hari is *catura śiromaṇi*, the crownjewel of clever pranksters. By cleverly attracting Śrī Rādhikā with the sweetness of His form, qualities, pastimes and flute-playing He makes Her forget everything! In his Rādhā Rasa Sudhānidhi (231) Śrī Prabodhānanda Sarasvatī shows how difficult it is for Śrī Rādhā to maintain Her pride —

aprekṣe kṛta niścayāpi suciraṁ dṛk koṇato vīkṣate
maune dārḍhyam upāśritāpi nigadet tam eva yāhīty aho
asparśe sudhṛtāśayāpi karayor dhṛtvā bahir yāpayed
rādhāyā iti māna dusthitim ahaṁ prekṣe hasantī kadā

When Śrī Rādhikā is angry with Kṛṣṇa, Her first resolution is: "I will not look at Him anymore!" But Kṛṣṇa, the crownjewel of clever pranksters, speaks in such a sweet way and stands before Her as if He begs Her: "Look at Me just once!" Seeing the sweetness of His form the *sakhīs* tell Each other: "Aha! How sweetly He stands there in His threefold bending form! The life of that lady-love who does not see that sweetness is wasted!" Hearing these words of Her friends, Śrīmatī becomes eager to see Kṛṣṇa and looks at Him once. Thus Her first resolution is broken! Her second resolution is: "I won't speak with Him!" How nicely Kṛṣṇa is speaking! Svāminī cannot stay silent anymore and tells Him: "Go to that girl that You love

[87] Narrated by Śrī Ānanda Gopāla Gosvāmī.

[88] Śrī Baṅgabihārī Vidyālaṅkāra adds: *he indīvarākṣi kṛṣṇa-bhṛṅgākarṣaka nīlotpala-nayane* "O Indīvarākṣi! Your eyes are like blue lotus flowers that attract the Kṛṣṇa-bee!"

(another *gopī*), what are You standing here for, speaking such clever words?" Thus Her second vow is gone! Her third vow is: "I won't touch Him", but Kṛṣṇa gradually brings His foot forward and touches the tips of Śrīmatī's toes. This makes Her unsteady, so She angrily takes Kṛṣṇa by the hand and pushes Him out of the *kuñja*. Śrīmatī thinks: "Just see, now I've also touched Him! If I could not keep any vow, then how can I keep Him away?", so She holds Him by the neck and brings Him back into the *kuñja*. In this way Hari steals Svāminī's heart in so many ways.[89] Therefore She once told Her *sakhīs*:

koho sakhi! ki kori upāy?
nā jāni ki guṇa koilo vidagadha rāy
gharera āṅginā dekhibāre lāge sādha;
tabu nā gaṇe mone eto paramāda
o-rūpa dekhiyā koilu maraṇa samādhi;
rāti dina kāñde prāṇa viṣama veyādhi
āna kathā kaho yadi gurura sammukhe;
bharame śyāmera nāma āise mora mukhe

"O *sakhi*, tell Me, what should I do? I don't know what kind of spell Vidagdha Rāy (the king of clever pranksters) has put on Me! Yet, I can't resist the temptation to step onto the veranda to see Him, without considering how crazy and dangerous that is! By seeing His form I have built My own *samādhi* (I dug My own grave); day and night My heart cries in a severe fever! If I say anything else in front of My superiors the name of Śyāma may accidentally come from My mouth!" (Pada Kalpataru)

Tulasī puts the bangles on Svāminī's wrists. How beautiful these bangles look when they attain a place on Svāminī's wrists! How sweetly they jingle '*runu jhunu runu jhunu*', enchanting the enchanter of the world! When Svāminī dances or plays ball Her bangles jingle like the enchanting weapon of Cupid. In the morning when Kṛṣṇa goes out to tend His cows (*pūrva goṣṭha*) He sees Rādhikā standing on the watchtower, like a golden lightning-strike on a jewelled palace, wearing a cloud-blue dress: *tuṅga maṇi-mandire thira bijurī sañcare, megha-ruci vasana paridhānā* (Kavi Śaśi-Śekhara). In front of Her superiors Svāminī cannot openly gaze at Kṛṣṇa. While She pulls Her veil over Her head Her bangles jingle. This enchants the enchanter of Cupid. The surrendered maidservants understand Their mood. During the Rāsa-dance Svāminī's bangles also jingle. How wonderfully She moves Her lotus-like hands! Her bangles buzz sweetly like she-bees on lotus flowers (Her hands) with stems (Her arms). How sweetly these bangles jingle when Svāminī shakes the dice with both hands during Their daily game of dice! How much Śyāma relishes this! This sweet sight is an elixir for the eyes and this sweet sound is an elixir for the ears! While she serves Svāminī the *kiṅkarī* brings all this relish of Śyāma Nāgara into Her heart. Svāminī's heart is engrossed in *rasa*. She is Hari Dayita and Indīvarākṣi. Once, during the Rāsa-dance, when both Rādhā and Śyāma are dancing, Śyāma suddenly stops dancing and Svāminī says: "Why don't You dance? You dance so nicely, I don't know how to dance like that!" Śyāma says: "You dance even nicer than Me! I see how beautifully You dance and I can see how I dance Myself in the pupils of Your eyes, that defeat the blue lotus flowers! When I see My own reflection in Your eyes it's clear to Me that I don't dance as nicely as You do!" Tulasī gladdens Bhāvamayī's (emotional Rādhikā's) heart with the pictures of these memories. How beautiful are Svāminī's eyes when She is with Śyāma! Svāminī says: "Tulasi! I am anyway mad (after Him)! Why do You make Me even more mad by reminding Me of Him?" After hanging the bangles on Tulasī puts jewelled rings on Svāminī's fingers, that defeat the buds of golden Campaka-flowers in beauty. Śrī Viśvanātha Cakravartī writes in Kṛṣṇa Bhāvanāmṛta (4.86):

[89] Narrated by Śrī Ānanda Gopāla Gosvāmī.

kara-daleṣu dhṛta vabhur urmikās trayam ṛte varam atra tu dakṣiṇam
kim u nakhendubhir abja-yuge śrite navavale vavale'py uḍu maṇḍalī

"Śrī Rādhikā wears jewelled rings on all of Her fingers, except for the thumb, the indexfinger and the middle finger of Her right hand. Normally the moon and the lotus can not be seen together, but on Śrī Rādhikā's extraordinary transcendental lotuslike hands it is as if the moon fearfully takes shelter. Therefore the moon's beloved stars are surrounding the petal-like fingers of these lotuslike hands in the form of the fingerrings, diffusing a lovely kind of beauty!" Śrīmatī can see Kṛṣṇa reflected in Her jewelled rings without being noticed by Her superiors![90] [91]

Śrī Rasika Candra Dāsa sings:

he indīvarākṣi rādhe Kṛṣṇa bhṛṅga ākarṣite,
tomā boi nāhi keho āra.
tomāra yugala kare, maṇimaya alaṅkāre,
sājāibo vāsanā āmāra.

"O Rādhe with the blue lotus-eyes! No one can attract the Kṛṣṇa-bee like You! I have a keen desire to decorate Your hands with jewelled ornaments!"

kanaka campaka kali, sundara aṅguli guli,
angurī pāraye dibo tāya.
heri sei śobhā rāśi, prīta hobe Kṛṣṇa śaśi,
dāsī bole rākho nija pāy!

"I will put rings on Your fingers that are as beautiful as the golden buds of Campaka-flowers. Seeing that abundance of beauty, the Kṛṣṇa-moon will be very pleased! Please call me Your maidservant and keep me at Your feet!"

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VERSE 31:

PĀDĀMBHOJE MAṆIMAYA TULAKOṬI YUGMENA YATNĀD
ABHYARCE TAD DALA-KULAM API PREṢṬHA PĀDĀṄGULĪYAIḤ
KAÑCI-DĀMNĀ KAṬI-TAṬAM IDAM PREMA-PĪṬHAṀ SUNETRE
KAṀSĀRĀTER ATULAM ACIRĀD ARCAYIṢYĀMI KIṀ TE

pāda - feet; *ambhoje* - on the lotus; *maṇimaya* - studded with jewels; *tulakoṭi* - anklebells; *yugmena* - with a pair; *yatnād* - with care; *abhyarce* - having worshiped; *tad* - that ; *dala* - leaves (toes); *kulam* - group; *api* - even; *preṣṭha* - dear; *pāda* - feet; *aṅgulīyaiḥ* - with rings; *kāñcī dāmnā* - with a sash in the form of waistbells; *kaṭi-taṭam* - on the hips; *idam* - this; *prema* - of love; *pīṭhaṁ* - seat; *sunetre* -

[90] This paragraph is explained by Śrī Ānanda Gopāla Gosvāmī.

[91] Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī states that Śrī Rādhikā's rings are marked with Her own name and are called 'Vipakṣa Mada Mardinī', the destroyer of Her rivals' pride.

fair eyed girl; *kaṁsa ārāteḥ* - of Kṛṣṇa, the enemy of Kaṁsa; *atulam* - incomparable; *acirāt* - soon; *arcayiṣyāmi* - will worship; *kiṁ* - what; *te* - Your.

O Sunetre (fair-eyed girl)! Will I soon worship Your lotus feet by carefully putting jewelled anklebells on them, and worship the petals of those lotuses (Your toes) with Your dearest toerings? Will I soon worship Your waist, which is Kṛṣṇa's matchless loveseat, with a golden sash of jingling bells?

Explanations: First Śrī Raghunātha has a vision in his *svarūpāveśa* and then he prays for devotional service in his 'external' consciousness; in this way it varies. The *sādhaka* does not concoct his own path and he does not want his independent conceptions; he depends on the words of the *ācāryas*. His prayers will be very pure when he serves the Gosvāmīs' syllables by hearing and chanting them. Each of these syllables is filled with the flavour of worship and the great eagerness with which their voices were filled when they offered their prayers. There is a merciful blessing for those who serve these syllables:

imaṁ vṛndāvaneśvaryā jano yaḥ paṭhati stavaṁ
cāṭu puṣpāñjaliṁ nāma sa syād asyāḥ kṛpāspadaṁ

Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī closed off his beautiful prayer named 'Cāṭu Puṣpāñjali' with the following benediction: "Anyone who recites this Cāṭu Puṣpāñjali-prayer, dedicating it to the Queen of Vṛndāvana, Śrī Rādhikā, will certainly become the object of Her mercy." *rādhā-dāsya-bhajan* cannot be performed in mundane consciousness and it should not depend on any external condition. The words of the Gosvāmīs are very powerful, they will remove material consciousness and cause the heart to be absorbed in Śrī Rādhā's devotional service.

Śrī Raghunātha floats into the kingdom of *līlā* on the waves of prayer. Tulasī worships Śrī Rādhikā's lotus feet with anklebells. The word *abhyarce* in the text means 'formal worship', which usually means regular worship of the deity in the temple with incense, flowers, bath and so on. It is quite unusual to worship with anklebells, waistbells and toerings, but such are the ingredients of worship in the transcendental kingdom of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa's pastimes. Sometimes when Śrī Rādhikā goes out at night to meet Kṛṣṇa (*abhisāra*) She wraps Her cloth around Her anklebells to stifle them. Why doesn't She take them off altogether? She wants to make them jingle later, when She approaches the trysting-*kuñja*, so that Kṛṣṇa can hear Her coming. Kṛṣṇa will be so eager for Her to come that He stares down the road for Her at every moment, always imagining that He hears Her footsteps when He hears the dry leaves falling from the trees. So these anklebells are meant to drive Him mad. Also during intimate pastimes they drive Him mad, so they are the best possible ingredients for this formal worship, and Tulasī is the 'priest' who performs that worship. The jewelled anklebells are shimmering on Śrī Rādhikā's beautiful lotus feet. Tulasī says: "How will You make the Rāsa-dance glorious without having Your jingling anklebells on? You have to madden Your hero, don't You?" Svāminī shows the thoughts on Her mind through Her artistic dancing. The anklebells jingle along with every gesture She makes during the dance.

nāgara nācata nāyarī saṅga; vividha yantra koto śabda taraṅga
balaya ghuṅghura maṇi kiṅkiṇī kalane; nūpura runu jhunu bājata caraṇe

"The hero dances with the heroine and different musical instruments make waves of sound. The bangles, waistbells and anklebells all resound on Their limbs."

The more ecstatic the *gopīs* dance, the louder their anklebells jingle! Śyāma plays His flute and the jingling of Svāminī's anklebells enhances the sweetness of His fluteplaying. Suddenly one of these anklebells falls off, so that Śyāma's flute does not sound so sweet anymore. It is as if something is missing. Śyāma looks in all four directions and then finds out that one anklebell is missing on Svāminī's feet. Śyāma tucks His flute in His belt and hangs the anklebells back on Svāminī's foot with both hands. Now His flute sounds as sweet as before again. Sometimes a *kiṅkarī* may also put the anklebell back while she dances and dances. While Tulasī makes Svāminī relish this *rasa* she puts the jewelled anklebells on Her feet. The practising devotee should also have some experience while he meditates on his devotional service. The flavour of Vraja is transcendental and as long as there is even a whiff of material consciousness in the heart these realizations cannot be had. The practising devotee should nicely follow the process of hearing and chanting with great attachment and without committing offenses, and the more purified he gets, the more his heart will become like a crystal that will reflect (perceive) the *rasa* of Vraja. Although we may be practising *bhajan* for a long time feelings of love or *rati* may not arise due to bad luck, or because we contaminate our hearts by commiting sins and offenses. *Bhajan* is the means and the goal. We do *bhajan* to attain only more *bhajan*. Śrīla Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura sings: *pākile se prema bhakti, apakke sādhana rīti, bhakati lakṣaṇa tattva sāra* (Prema Bhakti Candrikā) "When *bhajan* is ripe it is called *prema bhakti* and when it is unripe it is called *sādhana*. This is the essential definition of devotion." How wonderfully Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī was fixed in his *bhajan*! He was always floating in an ocean of uninterrupted meditation on the *rasika* pastimes of the Yugala Kiśora! *raghunāthera niyama yeno pāṣānera rekhā* (C.C.) "Raghunātha's discipline was like the line carved in a stone".

While she makes Svāminī dive in the ocean of Śyāma-*rasa* Tulasī puts the jewelled anklebells on, calling Her Sunetre (beautiful-eyed girl), seeing the wonderful blooming beauty of Her eyes. The eye that sees Kṛṣṇa is a *sunayana*, a good eye, but the *gopīs* will never call that eye that does not see Kṛṣṇa, a beautiful eye, rather they will curse such an eye:

vaṁśī gānāmṛta dhāma, lāvaṇyāmṛta janmasthāna,
ye na dekhe se cāṅda vadana
se nayane kibā kāja, poḍu tāra māthe bāj,
se nayana rahe ki kāraṇa?

(Caitanya Caritāmṛta Madhya 2,29)

"Kṛṣṇa's moonlike face is the abode of His nectarean flutesong and the birthplace of natural nectarean beauty. What is the use of the eye that does not see Him? Let a thunderbolt fall on it!" The *gopīs* cannot imagine that there can be any other use of the eye than seeing Kṛṣṇa, therefore they say in Śrimad Bhāgavata (10.21.7) *akṣaṇvatāṁ phalam idam na paraṁ vidāmaḥ* "We do not know of any other (or greater) fruit for the eyes!"[92] Tulasī serves Svāminī by crystallizing Śyāma before Her with her *rasika* descriptions. Then Tulasī puts sweetly jingling toerings on Śrīmatī's lovely toes, calling them *preṣṭha* (dearly beloved) and thinking: "Aha! How fortunate are these toe-rings! What if I could always stay on Svāminī's sweet lotus feet like that? Who would not feel fulfilled by always staying on these lotus feet?" Śrīla Narottama Dāsa Ṭhākura sings: *yābo go vrajendra pura, hobo gopikāra nūpura,*

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[92] Śrī Baṅgabihārī Vidyālaṅkāra writes: *he sunetre sarva cittākarṣaka śrī kṛṣṇasyāpi cetasa ākarṣakatvāt saubhāgya pracura locane* "O Sunetre! Your very beautiful eyes attract even Śrī Kṛṣṇa, although He Himself can attract everyone's hearts!"

tādera caraṇe madhura madhura bājibo go! (Prārthanā - 21) "O! I will go to the abode of the king of Vraja (Vṛndāvana) and become the anklebell of a *gopī*, jingling ever-so-sweet on her lotusfoot!" These toerings are also the greatest paraphernalia of worship, because they can illuminate the sweet beauty of Svāminī's lotus feet. Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī writes (in Kṛṣṇa Bhāvanāmṛta 4,95):

madhurimaiva dadhād vividhābhidhaḥ sva saphalī-kṛtaye padayor luṭhan
raṇa raṇety aparan api tad guṇān sukṛtinaḥ kṛtinaḥ kim atuṣṭuvat

"Sweetness itself rolled at Śrī Rādhikā's feet to make itself successful in different ways, appearing as Her footornaments and engaging other fortunate souls in praising Her glories by making sounds like '*raṇa raṇa*'." *mahakṛtā mahatā madanena kiṁ nija gṛhe jagṛhe maṇi toraṇam* (K.B. 4.92) "Just as wealthy people almost always have a festivity at their homes the very wealthy Cupid also made a jewelled gate (in the form of the bells that hang from Śrī Rādhikā's buttocks) in front of his own house to perform his endless festival." *Prema pūjārinī* (the priest of love) Tulasī hangs a belt with bells on Svāminī's hips and says: "I want to see Śyāma going mad from the jingling of Your jewelled sash of bells when You turn and swing during the Rāsa-dance with Your matchless buttocks! All His heart's attachments are in Your hips! It is the incomparable seat of His love!" *idam atulaṁ kaṭitaṭaṁ kaṁsārāteḥ premapīṭhaṁ.* Svāminī's beautiful eyes are startled when She hears Tulasī speaking about Kaṁsāri. She anxiously looks at Tulasī's face with some fear in Her eyes. Tulasī says: "There's no need to be afraid! This powerful hero, who is able to kill Kaṁsa, is now completely captured by the beauty of Your buttocks. There's no comparison to them (and to Him)!" Hearing the word Kaṁsāri Śrī Rādhikā thinks: "Has He come?"
Śrī Rasika-Candra Dāsa sings:

śuno rādhe! sulocane! tava raṅga śrī caraṇe
porāibo kanaka nūpura.
colibe go yei kṣaṇe, mājāye śyāmera mana,
bājibe go madhura madhura!

"Listen, O fair-eyed Rādhe! I will hang golden anklebells on Your beautiful crimson lotus feet! As soon as they move they will inundate Śyāma's mind with their ever-so-sweet jingling!"

kanaka kamala dala, pādāṅgulī ye sakala,
tāhe dibo aṅguli bhūṣaṇa.
tava kṣīṇa kaṭi-taṭe, śrī kṛṣṇera prema-pīṭha,
kāñcī dāme koribo śobhana

"I will put ornaments (rings) on Your toes, that are like the petals of Your lotus feet, and I will beautify Your thin waist, that is the seat of Śrī Kṛṣṇa's love, with a sash of bells!"

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VERSE 32:

LALITATARA MṚṆĀLĪ KALPA BĀHU DVAYAṀ TE
MURAJAYI MATI HAṀSĪ DHAIRYA VIDHVAṀSA DAKṢAM
MAṆI-KULA RACITĀBHYĀM AṄGADĀBHYĀṀ PURASTĀT

PRAMADA-BHARA VINAMRĀ KALPAYIṢYĀMI KIṀ VĀ

lalitatara - very lovely; *mṛṇālī* - lotusstem; *kalpa* - considered; *bāhu* - arm; *dvayaṁ* - couple; *te* - Your; *murajayi* - the victor of Mura; *mati* - mind; *haṁsī* - (fem.) swan; *dhairya* - patience; *vidhvaṁsa* - destroying; *dakṣam* - expert; *maṇikula* - jewels; *racitābhyāṁ* - both made with; *aṅgadābhyām* - with both armlets; *purastāt* - in the presence; *pramada* - bliss; *bhara* - abundance; *vinamrā* - humbly; *kalpayiṣyāmi* - I will make; *kiṁ* - what; *vā* - or.

When can I humbly and joyfully decorate Your arms, that are like very lovely lotusstems that are expert in destroying the patience in the swan-like intelligence of Murajayi (Kṛṣṇa), with armlets studded with various jewels, or render any other service to You?

Explanations: Thus the loving maidservant serves Śrī Rādhārānī. The services that are dear to the heart are externally manifest in these prayers. Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī is Śrīman Mahāprabhu's mercy-incarnation, descending along with the Lord to give the world the perfect example of *bhajan*. He and the other Gosvāmīs are Vraja's eternally perfect *mañjarīs*, who have descended to earth as Mahāprabhu's beloved associates to teach the world the ways of *bhajan*. Śrīman Mahāprabhu gave them that responsibility, and there is no other shelter than their lotus feet. One must meditate on how Tulasī renders her devotional service. They are extraordinary maidservants, who never descend from their maidservant-seats! Lalitā and Viśākhā sometimes act as Kṛṣṇa's *nāyikās* (heroines, or amorous partners), but the *kiṅkarīs* do not accept that position even in their dreams, although in form and qualities they are qualified to be Yūtheśvarīs (*gopī*-groupleaders) in all respects!

tā vidyud udyuti jayi prapadaika rekhā vaidagdhya eva kila mūrtibhūtas tathāpi
yūtheśvarītvam api samyag arocayitvā dāsyāmṛtābdhim anusasnur ajasram asyāḥ

"Each line on these *mañjarīs*' toes defeats the bright splendour of the lightning. They are cleverness personified and although they are qualified to be *yūtheśvarīs* (*gopī*-groupleaders) they have no taste for this at all. They are always immersed in the nectar ocean of Śrī Rādhikā's service." (Śrī Kṛṣṇa Bhāvanāmṛta 3.2) In dreams, wakefulness or deep sleep the light of Śrī Rādhā's shimmering toe-nails shines in the *kiṅkarīs*' hearts. Śrīla Dāsa Gosvāmī says "I offer my obeisances unto Your friendship! I only desire Your devotional service!" They are *mañjarī* in name, *mañjarī* in nature and *mañjarī* in form (*mañjarī* means 'bud' and the *mañjarīs* are similarly girls of very tender youth, both in form and in nature). Buds never allow the bumblebee (Kṛṣṇa) to enjoy them, although they do increase the bee's thirst for the blooming flowers that they accompany. This is their supreme purity. Śrī Rūpa Mañjarī is the bud (*mañjarī*) of Śrī Rādhā's form (*rūpa*), and Śrī Rati is the bud of Śrī Rādhā's love (*rati*).

Tulasī serves Svāminī with *prasaṅga sevā*, making Her relish Her own sweetness while putting Her armlets on. Tulasī says: "Do You know what Your arms are like?" Svāminī : "No, tell Me!" Tulasī: "He who understands it has made me understand. Śyāma is a good follower of Yours! His swan-like mind was enchanted by the sweetness of Your golden lotus stem-like arms and it destroyed His patience! (Swans are naturally fond of eating sweet lotus stems by the shores of the ponds) Sometimes, when You are proud and angry with Him, Kṛṣṇa will beg You for a festival of embraces, but You will wave Your arms and say: "No! No!" You think I did

not understand that? Even the patience of the victor of the Mura-demon will be destroyed by the beauty of Your arms and he will anxiously pray: 'My heart is breaking, give Me some happiness!' In this way Tulasī maddens Svāminī by reminding Her of Her lover with Her *prasaṅga*-service.[93]

How wonderfully the truth hums through this *rasika* verse: *murajayi-mati-haṁsi dhariya vidhvaṁsa dakṣam* "The beauty of Your arms destroys the patience of Murajayi Kṛṣṇa's swan-like intelligence." The word '*mati*' in the text means: 'that intelligence which determines the truth'. Only the beautiful arms of Śrīmatī can destroy the great intelligence of that great hero who destroyed the demon Mura. That shows how great Śrīmatī's love for Him is, for it is Her love that makes Her so beautiful.

Kṛṣṇa kohe - āmi hoi rasera nidhāna
pūrṇānandamaya āmi cinmoy pūrṇa tattva; rādhikāra prema āmā korāya unmatta
nā jāni rādhāra preme āche koto bol; ye bole āmāre kore sarvadā vihvala
rādhikāra prema - guru; āmi śiṣya naṭa; sadā āmā nānā nṛtye nācāya udbhaṭa

(Caitanya Caritāmṛta Ādi 4)

"Kṛṣṇa says: "I am the abode of transcendental flavours. I am the fully ecstatic, full transcendental truth, but Rādhikā's love is making Me mad. I don't know how much power there is in Rādhikā's love that it always overwhelms Me! Rādhikā's love is the *guru* and I am the dancing disciple. She always makes Me dance various dances." Śrī Kṛṣṇa considers to Himself: "I am the shelter of all transcendental bliss and flavours and when My devotees taste even a drop of this bliss and relish they are able to give up all other attachments and they become totally mad, it is absolutely impossible to madden me. Secondly I am the embodiment of full transcendental bliss. The whole world becomes mad from even a single drop of the ocean of My bliss. It is therefore impossible for anyone to make Me happy! Thirdly, I am the full transcendental truth. The blissful experience of Kṛṣṇa-consciousness fulfills the desires of the whole world. No one is able to cover over My knowledge and drive Me mad. But Śrī Rādhikā's love is making the impossible possible. Not only can She madden Me, Her love is My *guru* who makes Me dance various dances like a dancing-pupil!" Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī writes the following commentary on this: *..nānā nṛtye ityatra ayam bhāvaḥ.sarva śakti sarva sukha paripūrṇaḥ satya svarūpo nitya jñānādimayo'py ahaṁ kadācit jaratī bhayāt rādhā prāṅgaṇa koṇe nihṛtya tiṣṭhāmi kadācit rādhā saṅga sukhāśayā tad āgamana panthānaṁ paśyāmi kadācit tad arthaṁ chadma-veśī bhavāmi kadācit latāyāṁ tad bhrānto bhavāmīty adikam tat premaiva kārayatīti.* "Śrī Rādhā's love makes Me dance various dances. This means that although I am all-powerful, the power of Rādhā's love makes Me hide in a corner of Her courtyard out of fear of Her mother-in-law Jaṭilā, although I am the embodiment of bliss I sometimes look down the road for Rādhā to come, being overwhelmed by desires for Her blissful company, although I am the embodiment of truth I sometimes may disguise Myself (for the sake of meeting Her) and although I am the eternal embodiment of knowledge I sometimes embrace a vine, mistaking it to be Her. All these things I do because of Her great love for Me."

Addressing the armlet, Tulasī says: "O Aṅgada! Surely you will take care that the matchless body of the One who wears You will be given to Someone (*aṅga* means body and *da* means giver, thus: 'giver of the body')." I have put this Aṅgada called Hari-raṅgada (delighter of Hari) on Your arms, and if I don't then the derivative meaning of the word *aṅga-da* (giver of the body) will be reversed and mean 'he who severs the body (*dā dhātu chedanārthe*, the verbal root *dā* means cutting)'. Through this interpretation Your fault will be publicly announced!"

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93 Purport by Śrīla Ānanda Gopāla Gosvāmī.

Tulasī tells Svāminī: "I have placed the Hari-raṅgada-aṅgada on Your arm. Dance once with Śyāmasundara while waving Your arms and singing sweetly, Your maidservant will be so fortunate to see You! Śyāma will be a good Dohāra[94] for You! That day You will place Your lovely arms on His shoulder and embrace Him! Your arms will be studded with goosepimples when You embrace Each other! You will have given it to Him exactly the way He wanted it; Your arm will be attended to by Śyāma's shoulder, hence I called this *aṅgada* Hari-raṅgada! How much wonderful happiness will that give to Śyāma!" Tulasī intoxicates Svāminī by reminding Her of all these bygone pastimes. When Tulasī said all this, Svāminī said: "Allright, put them on then!"[95] Śrī Līlāśuka has said:

adhīram ālokitam ārdra jalpitaṁ gataṁ ca gambhīra vilāsa mantharam
amandam āliṅgitam ākulonmada smitaṁ ca te nātha vidanti gopikāḥ

"O Lord! The *gopikās* know the sweetness of Your restless glances, Your luscious words, Your grave, yet playfully beautiful gait, Your tight embrace and Your eager and frantic smile." (Śrī Kṛṣṇa-Karṇāmṛta - 27) The *gopīs* are experienced, therefore the practising devotees should accept the mood of the *gopīs*. The maidservants of Rādhā understand everything, but someone who is in mundane consciousness cannot understand. Therefore Śrī Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura prays: *sakhīra saṅginī hoiyā tāhe hobo bhora* "I will become absorbed in this as a female companion of the *sakhīs*!' We must follow in the footsteps of Rūpa and Tulasī Mañjarī. When the transcendental vision thus vanishes Śrī Raghunātha loudly laments and prays for devotional service with topmost eagerness: "When will I put jewelled armlets on Your arms or adore You with other ornaments?"
Śrī Rasika-Candra Dāsa sings:

sundara mṛṇāla prāya, bāhu dvaya śobhā pāya,
Kṛṣṇa manahaṁsa yāhā heri
kabhu dhairya nāhi dhare, kobe āmi harṣa bhare,
vinamra hoiyā sukumāri !

sugaṭhita maṇicaye, kanaka kaṅkana dvaya,
bāhu dvaye koribo bhūṣita.
kim vā cāi anya veśa, kori devi sunirdeśa,
tāi diyā sājābo tvarita

"Your arms are like beautiful lotus-stems, and when Kṛṣṇa's swan-like mind sees them He will never stay calm. O Tender girl! When can I blissfully and humbly decorate these arms with nicely shaped golden, jewel-studded armlets? Or, O Devi, if You want any other dress, then just order me and I will quickly adorn You with that!"

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VERSE 33:

RĀSOTSAVE YA IHA GOKULA-CANDRA BĀHU SPARŚENA SAUBHAGA-BHARAṀ NITARĀM AVĀPA GRAIVEYAKEṆA KIM U TAṀ TAVA KAṆṬHA DEŚAṀ

[94] A member of the choir who repeats the *pradhāna*, the leader; a yes-man.
[95] Narrated by Śrīla Ānanda Gopāla Gosvāmī.

SAṀPŪJAYIṢYATI PUNAḤ SUBHAGE JANO'YAM

rāsa utsave - in the Rāsa-dance festival; *ya* - who; *iha* - here; *gokula candra* - the moon of Gokula, or the pleaser of the senses; *bāhu* - arm; *sparśena* - by the touch; *saubhaga* - fortune; *bharaṁ* - full; *nitarām* -fully; *avāpa* - attained; *graiveyakeṇa* - by a so called neck-ornament; *kiṁ* - whether; *u* - indeed; *taṁ* - that; *tava* - Your; *kaṇṭha-deśaṁ* - area of Your neck; *saṁpūjayiṣyati* - will fully worship; *punaḥ* - again; *subhage* - O beautiful, or fortunate girl!; *janaḥ* - person; *ayam* - this.

O Subhage (beautiful, fortunate girl)! Will this person one day worship Your neck, which attained all good fortune when it was touched by Kṛṣṇa, the moon of Gokula, during the festival of the Rāsa-dance, with a Graiveya-ornament?

Explanations: In his *svarūpāveśa* Śrī Raghunātha serves Svāminī according to his/her feelings. Each verse of this book is filled with his eager yearning for Her devotional service, and this yearning for the beloved deity is called *prema*. Śrī Raghunātha dāsa lives in the kingdom of *mahā bhāva,* therefore his strong yearning causes Him to experience the divine pastimes and his personal service in his *siddha svarūpa*. The armlets have been placed and now Tulasī will place the Graiveya-ornament, which is hung around the neck and which hangs like a triangle on the chest. Raghunātha then remembers the Rāsa-dance: "O Subhage (beautiful, fortunate girl)! Will this person one day worship Your neck, which attained all good fortune when it was touched by Kṛṣṇa, the moon of Gokula, during the festival of the Rāsa-dance, with a Graiveya-ornament?" There are many instruments played during the Rāsa-dance, but the most important ones are the Bherī-drum of Śrī Kṛṣṇa's tasteful cleverness and the Dundubhī-drum of Śrī Rādhikā's good fortune.

rāsa-līlā jayaty eṣā yayā saṁyujyate'niśam
harer vidagdhatā bheryā rādhā saubhāgya dundubhīḥ

"All glories to the Rāsa-*līlā*, in which the Bherī-drum of Hari's cleverness and the Dundubhī-drum of Rādhā's fortune are always united!" The extraordinary fortune of Śrī Rādhā is announced within the assembly of millions of *gopīs* that come to dance the Mahā Rāsa with Kṛṣṇa. Through the Rāsa-dance the world could know that: *rādhā saha krīḍā-rasa vṛddhira kāraṇa; āra sab gopīgaṇa rasopakaraṇa* "The other *gopīs* are actually meant only to increase Kṛṣṇa's enjoyment with Rādhā. They are only the instruments of Their mutual enjoyment." (C. C. Ādi 4,127) *rādhā vinu sukha hetu nahe gopīgaṇa* "Without Rādhā the *gopīs* can not make Kṛṣṇa happy." (verse 218) *tāhā vinā rāsa-līlā nāhi bhāy cite* "Without Rādhā, Kṛṣṇa does not enjoy the Rāsa-dance" These are all glorifications of the extraordinary good fortune of Rāseśvarī Śrī Rādhā. Subhage can also mean Sundarī. Raghunātha calls Her Subhage when he sees Her endless *rūpa lāvaṇya* (indescribable subtle beauty shining out through the physical appearance). Each time Tulasī places a decoration (*śṛṅgāra*) on Svāminī's limbs it is as if she brings Śyāmasundara, who is *śṛṅgāra rasa* (amorous love) personified before Her in His very own form! This increases Rādhā's sweetness without limit. The Mahājanas sing as follows about Rādhā's natural *rūpa lāvaṇya*:

dekho dekho rādhā rūpa apāra!

aparūpa ko vidhi, āni milāola, kṣiti-tale lāvani sāra
aṅgahi aṅga, anaṅga mūrachāyata, herai poḍoye adhīra
manamatha koṭi, mathana koru yojana, so heri mahi māhā gīra

"Behold, behold the endless beauty of Rādhā! Which Creator has brought this amazing essence of *lāvaṇya* to the surface of the earth? When Cupid sees Her limbs he faints and falls down in a very unsteady consciousness. Indeed, She can agitate even millions of Cupids! I have seen this myself on this earth!"

This natural *lāvaṇya*-beauty is again colored by Kṛṣṇānubhava (the Kṛṣṇa-experience); therefore Śrī Rādhikā is named Subhage. This is the devotional service of ecstatic love personified. It is as if Raghunātha dāsa is standing directly in the Rāsa-sthalī, that is how vivid his visions are! When the devotee becomes advanced in *smaraṇa* he no longer thinks: "I'm doing *smaraṇa*". He feels as if he is directly experiencing the *līlās* in transcendental revelations. When the practising devotees have a little such experience within their minds they think: "I've gotten a response!", but that is not so. The great *ācāryas* had experience and they also preached. The wise *rasikas* are most attracted to the sweet and lovely prayers that emanated from Śrī Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī's pen and that are testimonies of his ecstatic experiences. Through constant meditation the heart becomes ripe, and then the transcendental revelations come, that save the practising devotees' lives. Engrossment in the material world will lessen and attachments to sense-objects will vanish. Gradually the visions will become deeper and deeper. There is nothing sweeter than this in the world. Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī writes (Bhakti Sandarbha 304): *astu tāvad bhajana prayāsa kevala tādṛśatvābhimānenāpi siddhir bhavatīti*: "Leaving aside the endeavours in practical devotion, simply by considering oneself to belong to God one attains perfection." To be engrossed in *mañjarī-bhāva* and think: "I feel that I'm actually with Her!", that will please the heart! How wonderfully vivid is Srī Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī's *svarūpāveśa*, even when he is in external consciousness! This can be felt while reading his sweet prayers. How miserable he feels when he cannot see his Svāminī anymore! My heart wants to feel separation, what a goal! Be *virahī* (one separated), otherwise you cannot experience the joy of *milana* (meeting)!

How sweet is the address Subhage or Sundari! Such an address is not possible in bodily consciousness! It is Tulasī Mañjarī who speaks of the Rāsa-festival, not Raghunātha! Tulasī infuses experience in Svāminī's heart, as if she wants to show the *līlā* to Svāminī's eyes. She paints it on the canvas of Her heart with the brush of love and gives it shape again through words. She sees the festival of the Rāsa-dance: The Rāsa-ground is flooded with concentric circles: *gopī-Kṛṣṇa-gopī-Kṛṣṇa-gopī*. Let this effulgence shine in my heart! All the Kṛṣṇas are at the *gopīs*' chests, like sapphire medals in a golden *gopī*-necklace. *madhye manīnāṁ haimānāṁ mahā marakato yathā* (Bhāgavata Purāṇa). The word *rāsa* is a derivative of the word *rasa*. Rasa is being taken (*ādāna*) and given (*pradāna*) , and the root ingredient (*upādāna*) of the Rāsa is *rasa*. Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī writes in his Laghu Toṣaṇī-commentary *rāsah parama rasa kadambamaya*: The Rāsa-dance is a great abundance of *rasa*, spiritual flavour. The greatest and most desirable *rasa* of Vraja is *mahā bhāva*, and Śrī Rādhā has the *parama rasa* called *mādana mahā bhāva*, hence She is called Rāśesvarī. The Rāsa is only there so that Kṛṣṇa can enjoy Rādhārāṇī, but a festival cannot be accomplished with two or three people only. Billions of *gopīs* are there just to increase the beauty of this pastime; therefore it is called 'an abundance of the greatest *rasa*'.[96] In fact these *gopīs* are all Śrī Rādhā's expansions.

ākāra-svabhāva bhede vraja gopīgaṇa; kāya vyūha rūpa tāra rasera kāraṇa
bahu kāntā vinā nahe rasera ullāsa; līlāra sahāya lāgi bahuta prakāśa
tāra madhye vraje nānā bhāva rasa bhede; Kṛṣṇake korāya rāsādika līlāsvāde

[96] The last two paragraphs are explanations by Śrī Ānanda Gopāla Gosvāmī.

govindānandinī rādhā - govinda mohinī; govinda sarvasva - sarva kāntā śiromaṇi {C.C}

"The Vraja-goddesses (*gopīs*) appear in different forms and with different natures. They are all Rādhā's expansions and they are the cause of *rasa.* Without the presence of many consorts there can be no joy in *rasa*, therefore many consorts are manifested to assist in the pastimes. Of them, there are many kinds of consorts in Vraja with different natures and different flavours, that make Kṛṣṇa relish the Rāsa-*līlā* and other pastimes. Rādhā delights Govinda, She enchants Govinda, She is everything to Govinda and She is the crownjewel of all divine consorts!" There are many *gopīs* and there's only one Kṛṣṇa, so there is no limit to the ecstasy of the festival of *rasa*! The *gopīs* see that one Kṛṣṇa dances like a fire-brand in between many *gopīs* with great expertise. How wonderful is His beauty! The Mahājanas sing:

kāñcana maṇi-gaṇe, janu niramāyalo,
ramaṇī-maṇḍala sāja.
mājhai mājha, mahā marakata sama, śyāmaru naṭavara rāja.

"The circle of girls resembles a chain of gold and jewels and in the middle is the great emerald Śyāma, the king of dancers."

dhani dhani aparūpa rāsa vihāra.
thira vijurī saye, cañcala jaladhara, rasa varikhaye anivāra.

"O fortunate girl! How wonderful is this Rāsa-play! The restless monsooncloud constantly showers *rasa*, having met with the steady lightningstrikes!"

koto koto cāṅda, timira pora vilasai,
timirahu koto koto cāṅde
kanaka latāye, tamālahu koto koto,
duhu duhu tanu tanu bāndhe

"How many moons (*gopīs*) are playing in the darkness (Kṛṣṇa), and how many darknesses are playing in the moons! How many golden vines (*gopīs*) are embracing how many Tamāla-trees!"

koto koto paduminī, pañcama gāyata,
madhukara dhara śruti bhāṣa,
madhukara meli koto, paduminī gāyata,
mugadhala govinda dāsa

Govinda dāsa sings: "How many Padminīs (lotuslike *gopīs*) are singing in the fifth note, heard by the bumblebees (Kṛṣṇas), and how many bumblebees are singing with the Padminīs!" (Caitanya Caritāmṛta says:)

maṇḍalī-bandhe gopī-gaṇa kore nartana;
madhye rādhā saha nāce vrajendra-nandana

"The *gopīs* dance in a circle and Rādhā and Vrajendra-nandana dance in the middle." Each *gopī* thinks: "Kṛṣṇa is with me alone!" They don't even have time to notice that Kṛṣṇa is with other *gopīs*! That absorption is like a curtain for Kṛṣṇa as well as for the *gopīs*! How do we serve this Rāsa-*līlā*, that is there to proclaim Rādhā's fortune?

Tulasī says: "Your neck was worshiped by the touch of Gokula-candra's arm. Kṛṣṇa pleases (*candra*) Your senses (*go-kula*), therefore He is named Gokula Candra. He performs the Rāsa-dance simply to make You relish *rasa*! The Dundubhī-drum of Your good fortune

resounds; shouldn't such a fortunate girl like You be worshiped (by Kṛṣṇa)? Gokula-candra used His arm as an ingredient for this *pūjā*; now that arm is not manifest (because Kṛṣṇa is not with You now); if it was then I could not put this ornament on You, so now I use this (golden) Graiveya-ornament to worship You! Right now that is the best item of worship! May He go mad when He sees this ornament and take the *pūjā* over from Me, beautifying Your neck by embracing You! Desiring this to happen, I am now decorating You!"[97] Blessed is this maidservant! Blessed is Her service! She crystallizes the *līlā* before Bhāvamayī by serving Her this deep relish. Sensitive devotees will directly experience this pastime by hearing about it. Their purified hearts are like clear mirrors that will directly reflect this *līlā-rasa*, which will be spontaneously manifest in them. Mahābhāvamayī's mind and heart are always absorbed in an ocean of *līlā-rasa* and Tulasī makes great waves on that ocean by describing these different *līlās* to Her while serving Her. Bhāvamayī's mind and heart are greatly agitated. Tulasī says: "I put the Graiveya-ornament around Your neck now! May I now see that a new ornament has come to Your neck!" After this the vision disappears and Raghunātha dāsa cries of agony when he misses His beloved Svāminī once again.
Śrī Rasika-Candra Dāsa sings:

vṛndāvane rāsotsave, vrajarāja suta yabe,
tava kaṇṭha koilo āliṅgana.
tāhāte saubhāga bhare, tava kaṇṭha manohara,
loye kobe kaṇṭha ābharaṇa.

peye tava kṛpādeśe, porā'bo se kaṇṭhadeśe,
sadā mone kori e vāsanā
he subhage tumi kobe, karuṇā nayane cābe,
pūrāibe dāsīra kāmanā

"When the prince of Vraja embraces You in Vṛndāvana's Rāsa-festival, it increases the beauty of Your enchanting neck. When can I take a neck-ornament and hang it around Your neck after receiving Your merciful order? Such are the desires on my mind! O beautiful girl! When will You fulfill the desires of this maidservant by mercifully glancing at her?"

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VERSE 34:

DATTAḤ PRALAMBA-RIPUṆODBHAṬA ŚAṄKHACŪḌA
NĀŚĀT PRATOṢI HṚDAYAṀ MADHUMAṄGALASYA
HASTENA YAḤ SUMUKHI KAUSTUBHA MITRAM ETAṀ
KIṀ TE SYAMANTAKA MAṆIṀ TARALAṀ KARIṢYE

dattaḥ - given; *pralamba* - the demon Pralamba; *ripuṇa* - by the enemy (Balarāma); *udbhaṭa* - proud; *śaṅkhacūḍa* - Śaṅkhacūḍa-demon; *nāśāt* - after destroying; *pratoṣi* - satisfied; *hṛdayaṁ* - heart; *madhumaṅgalasya* - of Madhumaṅgala; *hastena* - by the hand; *yaḥ* - who; *sumukhi* - O Fair-faced girl; *kaustubha* - the Kaustubha gem; *mitraṁ* - the friend; *etaṁ* - this; *kiṁ* - what; *te* - Your; *syamantaka maniṁ* - the Syamantaka jewel; *taralaṁ* - on the locket; *kariṣye* - I will do.

[97] Explanation by Śrī Ānanda Gopāla Gosvāmī.

O Sumukhi (fair faced girl)! After Kṛṣṇa killed the proud Śaṅkhacūḍa-demon He gave the Syamantaka jewel, that He took from the demon's head, to His brother Balarāma (the enemy of Pralambāsura). With a happy heart Balarāma gave it to Madhumaṅgala and You received it from Madhumaṅgala's hand. When can I hang this Syamantaka jewel, which is the friend of Kṛṣṇa's Kaustubha-gem, in a locket around Your neck?

Explanations: In the previous verse Śrī Raghunātha had a vision of himself hanging the Graiveya-ornament around Svāminī's neck, and when the vision subsides he feels a burning heartache. A great attraction to Svāminī's beauty and sweetness and the sweetness of Her love arises in his heart. The *taruṇī sevikā* (young maidservant) is eagerly crying out of separation from her Īśvarī, who is dearer to her than millions of her own life-airs. Here all lamentations over bodily conditions are absent. Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī feels separation from Rādhārāṇī, and that separation is like a darkness that becomes twice as deep after the lightning flash of Her sporadic audience is seen in the sky of his heart. She is like a golden Pikī-bird that flies in and out of the garden of his heart. Weeping and weeping Śrī Raghunātha's heart, that is eager to attain Her internally and externally, goes to the kingdom of pastimes, where he has one vision of Svāminī's dressing-pastimes after the other. This time he perceives his service of hanging the Syamantaka-jewel in a locket around Śrīmatī's neck. "Shall I hang this Syamantaka-jewel, which is the friend of Kṛṣṇa's Kaustubha-jewel, in a locket on Your chest?" Śrī Baladeva, the destroyer of the Pralamba-demon, was very pleased with Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the killer of the Śaṅkhacūḍa-demon, and gave Śrī Rādhā the Syamantaka-jewel through the hands of Madhumaṅgala. Tulasī awakens the remembrance of so many previous pastimes in Svāminījī's heart!

The story of the killing of Śaṅkhacūḍa is related in Śrīmad Bhāgavata, canto Ten, chapter 34. One spring-night, the night of Holi[98], the two divine brothers, Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma, enjoyed with the *gopīs* in Vraja's forest. How wonderful is Vṛndāvana's beauty!

kadācid atha govindo rāmaś cādbhuta vikramaḥ
vijahratur vane rātryāṁ madhyagau vraja yoṣitām
upagīyamānau lalitaṁ strī ratnair baddha sauhṛdaiḥ
svalaṅkṛtānuliptāṅgau srag viṇau virajo'mbarau
niśā mukhaṁ mānayantāv uditoḍupa tārakam
mallikā gandha mattāli juṣṭaṁ kumuda vāyunā

"One night Govinda and His wonderfully powerful brother Balarāma were rambling in the forest with the young ladies of Vraja. Sweetly singing, They were very much loved by these jewel-like ladies. Their bodies were nicely ornamented and anointed and They wore beautiful clothes and flowergarlands. They honoured the nightfall, which was marked by the appearance of the moon and the stars as well as by the humming of bumblebees that were intoxicated by the fragrance of the fresh Jasmine-flowers and was fanned by a breeze filled with the fragrance of waterlilies." The Mahājanas sing:

[98] The fullmoon night in March, also known as Gaura Pūrṇimā. Ed.

eke ṛtu-rāja, vraja samāja,
hori raṅge raṅgiyā
nāgarī-vara hori raṅge, unamati cita śyāma saṅge,
nācata koto bhaṅgiyā
gāyata koto rasa prasaṅga, bāyata koto vīṇāmucaṅga,
thaiyā thaiyā mṛdaṅgiyā

"It is the king of seasons, spring, and the society of Vraja blissfully celebrates Holi. The *gopīs*, the best of amorous heroines, are madly dancing with Śyāma, making so many delectable movements! How many *rasika* songs they sing and how many Vīṇās and other instruments they play! The *mṛdaṅgas* are pounding '*thaiyā thaiyā*!"

cañcala gati ati suraṅga, nirakhi bhule koto anaṅga,
saṅgīta rase suraṅgiyā.
svara-maṇḍala svara abhaṅga, vividha yantra jala-taraṅga,
madhura svara upāṅgiyā

"The *gopīs* dance with restless, captivating steps - seeing them, many Cupids would faint! The *saṅgīta-rasa* (flavour of song) is simply a knock-out! The *svara-maṇḍala* (gamut) clearly resounds (with unfailing voices), mixing with an array of instruments that reverberate in flowing waves of sweet enchantment!"

kheli golāpa aṅga-lāla, sundara-vara dyuti rasāla,
raṅgiṇī-gaṇa saṅgiyā
vrajavadhū-gaṇa dharata tāla, gāota pada nandalāla,
rāi aṅge aṅgiyā

"Rose-petals are showered over Śyāmasundara and the Raṅgiṇīs' (playful *gopīs*) beautiful, luscious and juicy bodies as His dancing ensues with theirs. The Vraja-*gopīs* give the rhythm and Nandalāla (Kṛṣṇa) sings songs while holding Rāi's body to His."

ho ho hori koroto bhāṣa, karatāli ghana mana ullāsa,
jaya jaya vara ḍhaṅgiyā.
govinda guṇa kori prakāśa, racita gīta uddhava dāsa,
hori rasa taraṅgiyā

"They exclaim "Ho ho hori!" and blissfully clap their hands, while others chant 'Jaya! Jaya!' Uddhava dāsa wrote this song, revealing Govinda's glories and the waves of *rasa* that are relished during the Holi-pastimes."

It was the night of Holi when the Śaṅkhacūḍa demon came to disturb Their enjoyment by trying to kidnap the *gopīs*. After Kṛṣṇa had killed the demon He took the Syamantaka jewel, that shone like the sun, from his head and gave it to His older brother Balarāma in front of all the *gopīs*.

śaṅkhacūḍaṁ nihatyaivaṁ maṇim ādāya bhāsvaram
agrajāyād adat prītyā paśyantīnāṁ ca yoṣitām

(Bhāgavata 10.34.33)

When Kṛṣṇa came carrying the brilliant Syamantaka-jewel each Vraja-*gopī* proudly thought that their Prāṇa kānta Govinda was going to hand them the jewel. Śrī Kṛṣṇa knew what was on the *gopīs*' minds and did not give any of them the brilliant jewel, rather He gave it to His elder brother Balarāma. Śrī Sanātana Gosvāmī writes in his commentary on this Bhāgavata-verse: *prāṇa priyatamāyai śrī rādhikāyai maṇir eṣo'vaśyam arpayitum iṣyate sākṣān mayā datte ca khalu mahyam asūyā sambhavet.* "Kṛṣṇa, after killing Śaṅkhacūḍa, thought to Himself: "Surely I'll have to give this jewel to My heart's beloved Śrī Rādhikā, but if I give it to Her directly all the other *gopīs* will surely bear a grudge against Me!" *tato'grajāya datto'py ayaṁ paramābhijñena mat prīty ekāpekṣyakeṇa tasyā evānena dātavyaḥ tato na roṣaḥ ko'pi śaṅkate. gurau ca tāsāṁ katham apy asūyā* "Let Me therefore give it to My elder brother. He knows everything and, out of love for Me, will give it to Śrī Rādhikā. No *gopī* can be angry with Him or blame Him, because He is My superior!" In his Sārārtha Darśinī-commentary, Śrī Viśvanātha Cakravartī adds: *sa ca mahāvijṣaḥ kṛṣṇābhīpsita sthala eva tam maṇiṁ nyadhad iti jñeyam*: "He (Balarāma) knows everything, so He will give the jewel to Madhumaṅgala, who will give it to Śrī Rādhikā." Balarāma thus blesses Śrī Rādhikā as if She is His younger sister-in-law. Because of Balarāma's sweet affection Tulasī can now decorate her Svāminī with this costly jewel. Tulasī is like Svāminī's shadow, never leaving Her. Her gaze is fixed on Her service and she serves Svāminī the honey-sweet *līlā-rasa*. How sweet it is to sit by their lotus feet, even while hearing and chanting about these services! "The Kaustubha-jewel on Kṛṣṇa's chest is the friend of the Syamantaka-jewel on Your bosom! They are friends through the *līlā*, not despite the *līlā*!" A slight sweet smile appears like a line on Rādhikā's face as She hears the sweet intimate words of Her *surasikā kiṅkarī*!

The Kaustubha-gem and the Syamantaka-jewel are friends, like two devotees whose friendship is centered around Śrī-Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa. The *kiṅkarīs*' friendship is also based on their service to Śrī Radhika. How wonderful is the friendship of Rūpa and Raghunātha! The friendship of Kaustubha and Syamantaka is just like that, accomplished through the *līlās*! This cannot be experienced without thinking of oneself as Śrī Rādhā's maidservant. As long as the mind drags the devotee here and there and keeps him absorbed in bodily consciousness there can be no aim at the truth. "Why am I always carried away by things that were not there before and that will not remain later? I am ruining myself by forsaking the service of the Lord, who is my all-in-all. I cannot forsake temporary things and strive for the eternal!" Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī lived like a prince before he joined Mahāprabhu. He was as wealthy as the heavenly king Indra, and his wife was as beautiful as an angel, but he gave it all up. Mahāprabhu, being very satisfied with his extraordinary example of loving devotion and renunciation, presented him with a Govardhana-*śilā* and a *guñjā-mālā*, thereby offering him to the lotus feet of Giridhārī and Śrī Rādhikā. In this way Śrī Rādhikā took a seat in his heart. The aspirants should also be asleep to the world and be awake to Śrī Rādhārāṇī's service - that is the teaching of the *ācāryas*.

Tulasī calls Svāminī 'Sumukhi'. By speaking about the friendship between the Kaustubha- and Syamantaka-jewels she awakens the memories of so many *rasika* pastimes within Svāminī's mind.[99] Śrīmatī's eyes and face light up with feelings of love when She hears Tulasī's nectarean words about the jewels. This beautiful face is the gate through which the feelings of the embodiment of feeling are manifest. That is why Tulasī calls Her Sumukhi, or fair-faced girl, here. Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī describes the endless waves of *bhāva* on the ocean of Śrīmatī's face as follows when he gives an example of Rādhikā's quality of Suvilāsā in Ujjvala Nīlamaṇi (Rādhā Prakaraṇa - 41):

tiryak kṣipta cala dṛgañcala rucir lāsyollasad bhrūlatā
kundābha smita candrikojjvala mukhī gaṇḍocchalat kuṇḍalā

[99] The last three paragraphs are commentaries by Śrī Ānanda Gopāla Gosvāmī.

kandarpāgama siddha mantra gahanām arddhaṁ duhānā giraṁ
hāriṇyādya harer jahāra hṛdayaṁ rādhā vilāsormibhiḥ

"Śrī Rādhikā's waves of playfulness, like Her crooked roving sidelong glances, the enchanting dancingsteps of Her vine-like eyebrows, Her smile, that shines like Kunda-flowers or like the moonbeams that brighten Her moon-like face, Her restlessly dangling earrings whose beautiful lustre illuminates Her cheeks, and Her sweet inarticulate words that sound like Cupid's perfect *mantras*, are stealing Hari's heart!"[100] When Tulasī remembers Svāminī's moonlike face, so full of ecstatic love, she prattles: "O Sumukhi! The gems of both of Them (Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa) are in an embrace. The black moon plays with the lotus. I saw Him relishing the honey that trickles from that lotus. Blessed is that moon if He can serve this lotus flower!" When Tulasī calls Her Sumukhī She immerses Svāminī in the remembrance of the *līlā-rasa*. Svāminī laughs at Tulasī in a naughty way and says: "O! Did you remember all this?" Tulasī: "I have to remember all this for You! You are Anurāgavatī, what if You would forget because of Your natural insatiability? Then I will have to remind You, won't I?" Svāminī would be shy to discuss such topics with Her friends Lalitā and Viśākhā, but She can trust Her loyal maidservant Tulasī, so She speaks out without shame. The maidservants are Śrī Rādhikā's *viśvāsa-bhūmi*, the objects of Her trust. Just as Raghunātha dāsa wants to hang the Syamantaka-jewel on Svāminī's chest he does not get anything anymore, and he prays and laments while eagerness arises in him.[101]
Śrī Rasika-Candra Dāsa sings:

duṣṭa śaṅkhacūḍa āsi, vṛndāvana paraveśi,
tomā lo'ye kore palāyana.
sei kāle vanamālī, tāhāra vināśa kori.
śiromaṇi korila grahaṇa

"The wicked Śaṅkhacūḍa came, entering Vṛndāvana to kidnap You, and ran away. At that time Vanamālī (Kṛṣṇa) destroyed him and took away the jewel from his head."

dilā rāme hṛṣṭa hoiyā, madhumaṅgalera diyā,
tomāre dilena upahāra
sei syamantaka maṇi, sakala śobhāra khani,
kaustubhera saha maitri yāra

"He blissfully handed the jewel to Balarāma, who gave it to Madhumaṅgala, who again presented it to You. That Syamantaka-jewel is itself a mine full of jewels of beauty and is befriended with Kṛṣṇa's Kaustubha-jewel."

mukutāra mālā gaṅthi, maṇirāja dibo tathi,
porāibo tomāra golāy.
he sumukhi! koho kobe, ei sevā more dibe,
dāsī kori rākhibe go pāy !

"I will string that king of jewels on a pearl necklace and hang it around Your neck. O fair-faced girl! Tell me, when will You grant me that service and keep me at Your feet as a maidservant?"

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[100] The commentary on this verse by Śrī Viśvanātha Cakravartī (named Ānanda Candrikā) is especially relishable for the devotees.

[101] Narrated by Śrīla Ānanda Gopāla Gosvāmī.

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VERSE 35:

PRĀNTA-DVAYE PARIVIRĀJITA GUCCHA-YUGMA
VIBHRĀJITENA NAVA KĀÑCANA ḌORAKEṆA
KṢĪṆAṀ TRUṬATY ATHA KṚŚODARI CED ITĪVA
BADHṆĀMI BHOS TAVA KADĀTI BHAYENA MADHYAM

prānta - at the end; *dvaye* - both; *parivirājita* - manifest; *guccha* - tassles; *yugma* - pair; *vibhrājitena* - shining; *nava* - new; *kāñcana* - golden; *ḍorakena* - with a string; *kṣīṇaṁ* - thin; *truṭati* - it breaks; *atha* - and then; *kṛśodari* - O slender girl!; *cet* - if; *iti* - thus; *iva* - as if; *badhnāmi* - I will bind; *bho* - O!; *tava* - Your; *kadā* - when; *ati* - very much; *bhayena* - with fear; *madhyam* - middle.

O Kṛśodari (slender girl)! Your waist is so thin that I'm very much afraid that it will break when I bind it with a golden string with tassles at both ends!

Explanations: In the previous verse Śrī Raghunātha hung the Syamantaka-jewel around Svāminī's neck and when this vision disappears he laments: "When will You give Me Your personal service?" Suddenly the vision of his devotional service returns and after hanging the Syamantaka-jewel he sees himself hanging a golden sash around Svāminī's waist with tassles on both ends. "Ayi Kṛśodari (slender girl)! When will I very fearfully hang this string around Your waist? Afraid that Your waist will break I will hang this string around it, just to bind it up!" Seeing how thin Śrīmatī's waist is Tulasī is afraid that it will break. The Mahājanas sing: *kesari jini, kṛśa mājhakhāni, muṭhe kori yāya dharā* "Her waist is more thin than that of a lion and it can be held even with a fist!" One can never serve God with love unless one knows the desires on His mind. We must get some impulse from Him therefore. On the strength of his loving devotion the curtain of God's mind will open for the devotee and he can see what is the Lord's desire. How glorious then are the *kiṅkarīs*, who are dedicated to the service of the full *mādana mahā bhāva*, Supreme Love personified, Śrīmatī Rādhikā, who keeps even Kṛṣṇa under Her control? Kṛṣṇa Himself worships *prema*, Divine Love, therefore He is also subdued by Śrī Rādhikā's maidservants; that is their full pride and glory. Kṛṣṇa became Gaura to taste the Love that Rādhikā feels for Him, and after He had experienced that He also wanted to taste the nectar of the *kiṅkarīs*' service. While He relished the mood of the *mañjarīs* the Lord's body became formed like a turtle, or sometimes His limbs would loosen and stretch out. Śrī Caitanya Caritāmṛta describes Mahāprabhu's mad words after He came out of His *kūrmākṛti* (turtle-form, Antya-*līlā* chapter 14):

ihā hoite āji mui geluṅ govardhana; dekho yadi Kṛṣṇa kore godhana cāraṇa
govardhane coḍi Kṛṣṇa bājāilā veṇu; govardhanera caudike core sob dhenu
veṇu-nāda śuni āilā rādhā ṭhākurāṇī; tāra rūpa bhāva sakhi varṇite nā jāni
rādhā loiyā Kṛṣṇa praveśilā kandarāte; ***sakhīgaṇa kohe moke phula uṭhāite***

"Today I went to Govardhana Hill", Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu said, "to see if Kṛṣṇa was tending His cows there. Climbing on Govardhana Hill, Kṛṣṇa played His flute, surrounded by the cows. Hearing the flutesong, Śrīmatī Rādhā came there. O *sakhi*, I can not describe Her form and mood! Kṛṣṇa took Rādhā by the hand and entered a cave with Her, while the *sakhīs* told Me to pick some flowers." For the service of Śrī-Śrī Rādhā-Mādhava the *sakhīs* are asking the *kiṅkarīs* to pick flowers. Here it is clear that Mahāprabhu finally came to relish the mood of the spiritual maidservants, *mañjarīs,* in the pinnacle of His ecstatic absorption. And when Mahāprabhu almost drowned of ecstasy in the ocean (see Caitanya Caritāmṛta Antya-*līlā* 18) and all the joints of His bones became disconnected out of ecstasy, He told His devotees in half-external consciousness:

kālindī dekhiyā āmi gelām vṛndāvana; dekhi - jalakrīḍā kore vrajendra nandana
rādhikādi gopīgaṇa saṅge ekatra meli; yamunāra jale mahāraṅge kori keli
tīre rahi dekhi āmi sakhīgaṇa saṅge; *eka sakhī sakhīgaṇe dekhāya se raṅge*

"Seeing the Yamunā-river I went to Vṛndāvana, where I saw the prince of Vraja, Kṛṣṇa, playing in the water with Śrī Rādhikā and the *gopīs*, having great fun. I stayed on the shore with the other *sakhīs*, while one *sakhī* showed this pastime to the others." Here again Mahāprabhu explains that He did not play an active role in Kṛṣṇa's pastimes, but that He (she) was relishing a service-position, like that of the *mañjarīs*, witnessing these sweet pastimes without taking active part in them! Caitanya Caritāmṛta then says: "*āpani kori āsvādane, śikhāilo bhaktagaṇe*", 'whatever He Himself came to relish, He taught to His devotees'. Since, as is shown above, He did relish *mañjarī-bhāva*, He was the One who taught it to the devotees also, notably through Śrīla Rūpa and Śrīla Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī. One can never understand the flavours of Vraja while remaining in a mundane consciousness, and the devotees who take shelter of Śrīman Mahāprabhu's lotus feet are the suitable candidates for relishing these flavours. To relish the sweetness of the love in Vraja one must give up the attitude of awe and reverence towards God. Vṛndāvana is the kingdom of sweetness and the *upāsana* (subject of worship and meditation) of Vraja *rasa* is a sweet *upāsana*, in which we want to see Kṛṣṇa as the *laukika sad bandhu*, a good worldly friend.

Of course, Śrīmatī Rādhikā's waist will not break so soon, but out of great, unadulterated love for her Svāminī Tulasī is afraid that it will. What does love seek? Only the happiness of its object! Only the lovers can make the beloved happy; the lovers think: "May You be happy!" *vrajera viśuddha prema, yeno jāmbunada hema, ātma-sukhera yāhā nāhi gandha* (C.C.): "The love of Vraja is as pure as molten gold, and there's not even a whiff of personal happiness there (in the hearts of these devotees)!" In Śrī Rādhā's mood Śrīman Mahāprabhu sings:

Kṛṣṇa mora jīvana, Kṛṣṇa mora prāṇa-dhana,
Kṛṣṇa mora parāṇera parāṇa.
hṛdaya upare dharoṅ, sevā kori sukhi koroṅ,
ei mora sadā rahe dhyāna.

"Kṛṣṇa is My life, Kṛṣṇa is the treasure of My life and Kṛṣṇa is the life of My life. I keep Him on My heart and I make Him happy with My service. I always meditate on this."

mora sukha sevane, kṛṣṇera sukha saṅgame,
ataeva deha deṅ dāna
Kṛṣṇa more kāntā kori, kohe tumi prāṇeśvarī,
mora hoy dāsī abhimāna

"My happiness lies in service and His happiness lies in intercourse, so I give My body to Him. Kṛṣṇa makes Me His consort and tells Me: "You are the Queen of My heart!", but I just consider Myself to be His maidservant!" {C.C.}

The maidservants just meditate on the pleasure of the Yugala Kiśora. Śrī Rādhikā and Śrī Kṛṣṇa have given Themselves to Each other and left all responsibilities for the arrangements of Their loving affairs to the *sakhīs* and the *manjarīs*. The playful Śrī Yugala has taken shelter of them. Unmādinī Rāi (maddened Rādhā). One day Śrī Rādhikā is going out alone to meet Kṛṣṇa, with merely *anurāga* (deep passionate attachment to Kṛṣṇa) as Her *dūtī* (girl-messenger), but when She comes to the gate of the *kuñja* where Kṛṣṇa is waiting for Her She suddenly feigns shyness and unwillingness and asks Her *dūtikā:* "Why have you brought Me here?" Even then She tries to satisfy Śyāma by making Him relish the *vāmya rasa*, the flavour of opposition. Śyāma and the *sakhīs* are very eager for Her to give up this opposition, but nothing helps. The ocean of Kṛṣṇa's eagerness increases and everyone feels great heartache. Then Vṛndāvana thinks: "Let me once see what I can do!" It is the Varṣāharṣa-vana , the blissful rainy season (or: Vṛndāvana suddenly creates a monsoon-forest with its *līlā-śakti*) and clouds are calling in the sky with deep rumbling voices, making Svāminī fearfully and tightly embrace the Lord of Her Life. The *sakhīs* say: "Blessed you are, friend the cloud! Today you were even more clever than all the *sakhīs* together!" In this way even the clouds of Vṛndāvana are blessed with the devotional service of the Śrī Yugala. This is the first meeting, described by the great poet Kavi Karṇapūra after he sucked the nectar out of Śrīman Mahāprabhu's toe. Again, sometimes Śyāma is helpless and finds no other means to meet Rādhikā but to take shelter of the *mañjarīs*. The *kiṅkarīs* know the grace and the beauty of the Yugala-*prema*.

Tulasī is in the kingdom of devotional service and decorates her Svāminī, telling Her: "Your waist is so thin, on top of that You have a heavy burden (Your bosom) and under it You have a heavy basis (Your broad hips)! What if it will break while You dance? That's why I'm always afraid!" By calling Her Kṛśodarī, slender girl, Tulasī reminds Svāminī of Her previous pastimes with Kṛṣṇa. Blessed is this maidservant! One day Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa have Their amorous pastimes in the *kuñja*. Svāminī is now the active lover and Śyāma is passive, the roles of the lovers are reversed... How wonderfully Kṛśodarī moves Her slender waist then! The transcendental youthful Cupid is beside Himself of ecstasy. Although He Himself is full of transcendental bliss His mind becomes overwhelmed when He carries the burden of *mahā bhāva*. The Nāgara is overwhelmed by Śrī Rādhikā's undulating sweetness! And Rādhārāṇī? When She gets Kṛṣṇa like this She is attacked by two enemies -*ānanda* (ecstasy) and *madana* (Cupid):

ye kāle vā svapane, dekhinu vaṁśī vadane
se kāle āilā dui vairī
ānanda āra madana, hari nilo mora mon,
dekhite na pāinu netra bhari

"That time or dream in which I saw Kṛṣṇa holding the flute to His mouth, two enemies came: ecstasy and Cupid. They stole My mind, so that I could not fully see Him anymore."

puna yadi kon kṣaṇa, korāya Kṛṣṇa daraśana,
tabe sei ghaṭī kṣaṇa pala.
diyā mālya candana, nānā ratna ābharaṇa,
alaṅkṛta korimu sakala

(Caitanya Caritāmṛta, Madhya 2)

"If I could see Kṛṣṇa again for just one moment, then I would decorate these seconds, minutes and hours with flower garlands, sandalwood pulp and jewels." Although the desire

arises in Her to praise even one moment that She can see Kṛṣṇa, Śrī Rādhikā can not even serve Him when She gets Him on Her lap! Thus She feels endless heartache. Śrī Rādhikā's activities increase Śyāma's ecstatic absorption. Then Tulasī leans against the gate of the *kuñja* and sings a love song. When our Hero, who is in a swoon, hears it, He comes back to life again. He had lost His body (or bodily consciousness, this is the explanation of the word '*anaṅga*' in the Kāma Gāyatrī-*mantra*) out of loving ecstasy, but now He has His body back, through Tulasī's doing. Cupid regains His body as soon as the amorous pastimes resume. Tulasī thus awakens the memory of all these pastimes within Svāminī's heart. As soon as Tulasī takes the new golden sash, on each side of which is a beautiful tassle, in her hand to tie it around Svāminī's slender waist, the vision disappears and Śrī Raghunātha dāsa prays for more *śṛṅgāra-sevā* (decorating service).[102]

Śrī Rasika-Candra Dāsa sings:

śuno devi! āmāra āśaya
ayi rādhe kṛśodari, vṛndāvana adhīśvari,
kaṭi tava kṣīṇa atiśaya
pāche tāhā bhaṅgī yāy, e āśaṅka kori tāy,
bandhana koribo svarṇa ḍore.
du'pāśe thopna tāra, kibā śobhā camatkāra,
kaṭideśa koribe ujore

"Listen, O Devi, to my aspiration! Ayi Slender Rādhe! O Queen of Vṛndāvana! Your waist is very slender, so I will bind it with a golden string with tassles at both ends, being very much afraid that it (Your waist) will break. How astonishing is the beauty of Your waist when it is thus decorated!"

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VERSE 36:

KANAKA GUṆITAM UCCAIR MAUKTIKAṀ MAT KARĀT TE
TILA KUSUMA VIJETRĪ NĀSIKĀ SĀ SUVṚTTAM
MADHU-MATHANA MAHĀLI KṢOBHAKAṀ HEMA-GAURI
PRAKAṬATARA MARANDA PRĀYAM ĀDĀSYATE KIM

kanaka - golden; *guṇitam* - strings; *uccaiḥ* - great; *mauktikaṁ* - pearl; *mat* - my; *karāt* - from the hand; *te* - Your; *tila-kusuma* - sesame flower; *vijetrī* - defeating; *nāsikā* - nose; *sā* - that; *suvṛttam* - round; *madhu-mathana* - Kṛṣṇa, the churner of the honey; *mahā* - great; *ali* - bumblebee; *kṣobhakaṁ* - agitating; *hemagauri* - golden beauty; *prakaṭatara* - becomes manifest; *maranda* - honey; *prāyam* - like; *ādāsyate* - will take; *kim* - whether.

O Hema-Gauri (golden girl)! When will Your nose, that defeats the beauty of a sesame flower, take a great, round nosepearl, attached to a golden string, from my hand? The great bee Madhumathana (Kṛṣṇa) will be very agitated by the honey that appears thus!

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[102] The last three paragraphs are narrated by Śrīla Ānanda Gopāla Gosvāmī.

Explanations: When the transcendental vision disappears and the lack of devotional service is felt it becomes hard to tolerate the resultant misery. Sometimes the *premika* devotee even faints, but when the beloved deity responds the swoon may subside. When there is no vision there is again lamentation and prayers for devotional service. In this way it gradually continues. From this verse we can understand that Tulasī has fainted, but now Svāminī personally calls Her back to consciousness in a transcendental vision: 'Tulasi! Won't you put on My nosering?" Śrī Raghunātha is awakened by Svāminī's merciful call. He is sitting there, waiting for devotional service and thinking: "I see I'm getting it, I'm getting it! How can I survive if I cannot serve Her even a little?" Tulasī's vine-like body is burning in the forest-fire of separation, and nothing but the shower of Svāminī's mercy can save his life! How merciful Svāminī is to call Tulasī for service like that!

"External consciousness is an obstacle for a conditioned soul like me. My mind is going in the other direction. I have no relationship with my *svarūpa* at all! How intense are my wordly relationships, I cannot forget them even if I try! All the things that drive me mad are temporary. All these things will go, with whom shall I stay?" Again others decide to keep one share for their bodies and those things related to the body, and another share for the Lord. But by tugging at the heart like this, trying to divide it into different parts, Śrīmatī's mercy cannot be attained! The whole heart must be given to Rādhārāṇī, all other engrossments are simply stumbling blocks - this is the teaching of the *ācāryas*! We should live in Vraja to follow the example of these *ācāryas*. Śrīpāda Prabodhānanda Sarasvatī has written in Rādhā Rasa Sudhānidhi (60):

kālindī salile ca tat kucataṭī kastūrikā paṅkile
snāyaṁ snāyam aho ku-dehaja malaṁ jahyāṁ kadā nirmalaḥ

"When will I wash the dirt off my wretched body by bathing again and again in the water of the Yamunā, which is muddled by the musk that is washed of Śrī Rādhikā's nipples?" The awareness of being Rādhikā's *dāsī* cannot arise in the heart of someone who is intoxicated by material, bodily consciousness![103]

Śrī Raghunātha dāsa has fainted of love-in-separation. Svāminī calls out: "Tulasi!" How nectar-sweet is Her voice when She calls Her *kiṅkarī* by name! At least a slight desire should arise in the heart of the *rāga-sādhaka* like this: "O Svāmini! When will You also call me by name like that? I'm sitting here with this endless expectation!" Blessed is Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī, for he has forgotten everything and has fallen on the bank of Rādhākuṇḍa and is crying in a heartrending way for the personal service and *darśana* of Śrī Rādhā. A *sādhaka* should also desire to be called for service like that, weeping and crying: "Aho! In which birth can I also obtain a drop from this ocean of spiritual emotions?" As much as even the faintest moonrays of *rāga*, that arise in Śrī Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī's moon-like heart, become reflected in the crystal-like hearts of the *rāga bhakti*-practitioners, that much their spotless hearts will be colored by his divine emotions. For the sake of those who desire to serve Śrī-Śrī Rādhā-Mādhava in the eternal supernatural playgroves of Vraja in a *bhāva-deha* (body made of transcendental love) Śrī Dāsa Gosvāmī mercifully kept this treasure of incomparable emotions in the form of this guidebook for spiritual recollection (*smaraṇa paddhati*), that is full of ever-expanding feelings of ecstatic love, in this world.

Svāminī calls Tulasī: "Tulasi, come! Won't you put on My nosepearl?" Tulasī thinks: "I've put on all decorations, now the nosepearl on the golden string is left! Let me see if Svāminī will take it Herself or not!", and openly she says: "Your nose-pearl is hooked to a

[103] Until here the explanation is given by Śrī Ānanda Gopāla Gosvāmī.

golden string! Will You take it from my hand? This pearl is very dear to You, and I have to put it on You! If there is no gold on Your nose Your breathing may be inauspicious for Priyatama, that's why You want to wear the nosepearl! My heart cries for this ordered service."[104] Blessed is this *kiṅkarī*, who knows like nobody else how to serve the deity according to His heart's desire! Śrīpāda Śuka Muni has called mother Yaśodā *Kṛṣṇa hitaiṣiṇī* , she who works for Kṛṣṇa's well-being. When His names, qualities and pastimes are being heard, chanted and remembered Kṛṣṇa bestows the greatest welfare on the world, but mother Yaśodā is always worried about His welfare. Kṛṣṇa is all-pervading (*vibhu*), and on the strength of His great love even the greatest sinner can be liberated from the material world and attain ecstatic *prema*, simply by chanting His holy name. This Kṛṣṇa became known in the world as Dāmodara because His mother Yaśodā bound Him with ropes. For Kṛṣṇa's welfare Śrī Rādhikā goes to His village Nandīśvara every morning to cook for Him, being blessed by Durvāsā Muni that whatever She would cook would be like nectar, increasing the life-span and health of anyone who would eat it and curing him from diseases. Every day Svāminī worships the Sungod and prays to him for the good health of Her Prāṇanātha. That is the nature of the love of Vraja, and that's why Svāminī asks Tulasī for this nosepearl on a golden string. When Tulasī puts on the nosepearl she immerses Svāminī in an ocean of sweet Kṛṣṇa-topics. "Your nose defeats even the sesame-flower in beauty and will make the Kṛṣṇa-bee very greedy! Even a Hero like Him cannot resist it!" Śrī Kṛṣṇa's *pūrva rāga* is described as follows:

yab koru kheli āli saiye bālā; heralu pathe janu cāñda ki mālā
aparūpa rūpa nayane majhu lāgi; anukhana mādhurī maramahi jāgi
e sakhi e sakhi mohe heri rāi; vihasi rahali dhani gīma morāi
so mukha jhalamala niramala jyoti; lolita nāsika veśara moti
raṅgima jāda vithāralo pīṭha; cakitahi majhu mana lāgalo dīṭha
aiche sukeśinī hāma nāhi pekhi; cita mūrati hiye rahalahi lekhi
pada-nakha aṅgulī yāvaka śobhā; daśa cāñda aruṇa bahu lobhā
so pada kamala hṛdaya kori seva; govinda dāsa yaba anumati debo

"When I saw Rādhā playing with Her girlfriends the path became lit up as if the full moon was emanating from there (or: they all resembled a garland of moons). The devastating beauty of Her form plays with My eyes, and its sweetness constantly arises within My heart. O *sakhi*! O *sakhi*! Rāi stayed there, turning Her neck to look at Me and smiled at Me. What a spotless light emanated from Her brilliant face - a dangling pearl hung from Her nose! The colorful tassles tossing from Her braid reach down to Her buttocks and make My mind and eyes restless. And I've never seen such beautiful curly hair - Her enchanting form is painted on My mind! The Yāvaka-lac on Her toes and around Her toenails make them desirable for ten red moons. (Or: The ten moons of Her toenails and the sun of Her footlac increase My desires!). Let me serve these lotus feet within my heart, says Govinda dāsa, as soon as She gives permission!"

"The beauty of Your nose naturally agitates the Śyāma-bee, and now I even hang this charming nosepearl under it on a golden string! The (sesame-)flower is there, but there's no honey to drip from it! How will the bee come then? This pearl will oscillate just as the honey dangles before it falls down when it is poured out!" While Tulasī hangs the nosepearl she's astonished by its beauty. Is it a new seed for a vine of elegance? Something to make Kṛṣṇa's parrot-like mind greedy? A globule of sweet nectar? A bait to attract the fish-like eyes of Kṛṣṇa? Or Cupid's arrow that is fired from the quiver of Svāminī's nose to destroy Kṛṣṇa's patience?[105] Tulasī says: "I have put Your nose-pearl on! It vibrates through the touch of the

[104] This *līlā* is described by Śrī Ānanda Gopāla Gosvāmī.

[105] Kṛṣṇa Bhāvanāmṛta, 4.63

wonderful *rasa* of Your breath! How sweetly it oscillates when You are dancing! It is as if it's almost going to fall off! Within it is the beauty of *śṛṅgāra rasa*, the transcendental erotic flavour, and it increases Your mutual relish. This relish can be understood by absorbing one's mind in it. Śyāma will not relish the beauty of Your nose unless I hang this pearl on it! The bee only loves a flower when some honey oozes out of it. This flower-like nose of Yours is especially desirable for the Kṛṣṇa-bee when this honey-like nosepearl comes out of it!" While Tulasī speaks to Her like this Svāminī's golden lustre comes gushing out, that's why Tulasī addresses Her here as 'Hema-Gauri', a compound-word of gold. Suddenly the vision disappears and it seems as if Raghunātha's eyes have lost their light (*jyotiḥ-śūnya*), so he prays: "O Hema-Gauri! Where are You? When will You take this nose-pearl from My hand?"[106]
Śrī Rasika-Candra Dāsa sings:

śuno puna he śrī rādhike, kanaka varaṇādhike,
tila phula jini nāsa mūle.
nirmala mukuta vṛtte, gāṅthiyā kanaka sūtre,
porāibo nija kare tule.

"Listen once more, O Rādhike, You who are more beautiful than gold! Your nose defeats the beauty of a sesame-flower, and with my own hands I will hang a pearl on it attached to a golden string."

heri se mukutā phala, makaranda ḍhala ḍhala,
śyāma ali hoibe mohita,
āra vā kohibo kibā, sei sevā more dibā,
ei mora monera vañchita.

"When the Śyāma-bee sees the honey-pearl dripping from Your flower-like nose He will become enchanted. What more can I say? It is the desire on my mind that You will give me this service!"

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VERSE 37:

AṄGADENA TAVA VĀMA DOḤ STHALE
SVARṆA-GAURI NAVA RATNA-MĀLIKĀM
PAṬṬA GUCCHA PARIŚOBHITĀM IMĀM
ĀJÑAYĀ PARIṆAYĀMI TE KADĀ

aṅgadena - with the armlet; *tava* - Your; *vāma* - left; *doḥ* - arm; *sthale* - in the place; *svarṇagauri* - golden beauty; *nava* - nine; *ratna* - jewelled; *mālikām* - string; *paṭṭa guccha* - silken tassles; *pariśobhitām* - beautified; *imām* - this; *ājñayā* - on Your order; *pariṇayāmi* - I will marry; *te* - Your; *kadā* - when.

[106] Narrated by Śrīla Ānanda Gopāla Gosvāmī

O Svarṇagauri (golden girl)! When will I, on Your order, marry (join) the armlet on Your left arm with a string of nine auspicious jewels, beautified by a silken tassle?

Explanations: Śrī Raghunātha dāsa's heart is immersed in the mellow of devotional service. Sometimes he serves as he wants it and sometimes as he is ordered. He relished the flavours of devotional service as an associate of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. Through his own life, that was full of *sādhanā*, he showed that the *ācāryas* are doing *bhajan* in faithful adherence. Śrī Raghunātha dāsa follows Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī:

ābhīra pallipati putra kāntā dāsyābhilāṣāti balāśvavārah
śrī rūpa cintāmala sapti saṁstho mat svānta durdānta hayecchur āstām

Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī opens his Abhīṣṭa Sūcana Stava by writing: "The desire to serve the lover of the son of the king of the cowherd-village is like a strong rider. May he mount the spotless horse of remembrance of Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī. This should be the desire of the wild horse of my heart." In other words: It is not good to have my own thoughts about how to attain Śrī Rādhā's service. Those who are like bumblebees, intoxicated by drinking the honey that oozes from Śrī Caitanya's lotus feet, are always eager to attain the intimate service of Śrī Rādhā, and they cannot attain it and experience it without following in the footsteps of the teachers of Vraja-*rasa,* Śrī Rūpa and Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī. *rūpa raghunātha pada hobe ākuti; kobe hām bujhabo sei yugala prīti* (Narottama Dāsa): "When I become eager for Rūpa and Raghunātha Dāsa's grace I will understand the love of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa."

Śrī Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī, in his spiritual absorption as Tulasi Mañjarī, is decorating Svāminī's beautiful body. What a great thing this is in the life of *sādhana*! By the grace of Rūpa and Raghunātha the *sādhaka*'s mind becomes qualified to relish these flavours and to think of Śrī Rādhārāṇī. Without great eagerness this sweetness cannot be known. How great is the eagerness of Rūpa and Raghunātha! Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī's 'Utkalikā Vallari' and Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī's 'Vilāpa Kusumāñjali' are proof of that. They are lamenting over Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī, and if the neophyte devotees can also lament like that over them (the Gosvāmīs) their ecstatic mood can be infused in them. Śrīla Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura lamented:

kāhā mora svarūpa rūpa kāhā sanātana; kāhā dāsa raghunātha patita pāvana
kāhā mora bhaṭṭa yuga kāhā kavirāja; eka kāle kothā gelā gorā naṭarāja
pāṣāṇe kuṭibo māthā anale paśibo; gaurāṅga guṇera nidhi kothā gele pā'bo
se saba saṅgīra saṅge ye koilo vilāsa; se saṅga nā pāiyā kāṅde narottama dāsa

"Where is my Svarūpa Dāmodara and where is my Sanātana Gosvāmī? Where is Raghunātha dāsa, the saviour of the fallen? Where are My Raghunātha Bhaṭṭa and Gopāla Bhaṭṭa, and where is Kṛṣṇa dāsa Kavirāja? Where has Lord Gaura, the king of dancers, gone this time? I will smash my head against the wall and enter into the fire. Where shall I go to find the ocean of qualities, Śrī Gaurāṅga? Narottama dāsa weeps when he cannot get their association, and the association of all those who sported with them." The fire of this love-in-separation is like the reviving nectar churned from the transcendental ocean of joy, sorrow, happiness and distress. The remembrance of this great love-in-separation tastes like nectar and keeps the *rasika* devotees alive. The *rāga sādhakas* should always pray: "Hā Svāmini! In exchange for my life I just want to understand that You are everything to me! Although I am unqualified to attain Your lotus feet please make it clear to me at least that I have no one but You in this world!"

Śrī Raghunātha dāsa is weeping, feeling great heartache. His loyalty is immeasurable. He wants to see Śrīmatī Kuṇḍeśvarī directly, so he falls on the bank of Śrī Rādhakuṇḍa with an unshakable vow: "I will not go anywhere outside of Rādhākuṇḍa without having seen my Kuṇḍeśvarī!" This enthusiasm will also arise in the hearts of any fortunate *sādhaka* who serves the *mahā-vāṇī* (great words) of the Gosvāmīs. *mahā śakti-śālī vāṇī* - these words are very powerful, and they will take the *rāga sādhaka* by the hand and bring him to the lotus feet of the beloved deity. This *vāṇī* will awaken a deep awareness of one's spiritual identity within the heart. "Unfortunately I have no self-identification as Rādhā's *kiṅkarī*; I'm always intoxicated by bodily consciousness. I am boasting about my learning and knowledge, but I have never recognised my true self. How tender is the thought: "I am Rādhā's maidservant!", and how much flavour arises within the heart then! Please awaken my *svarūpa*, O Svāmini! I don't want anything else!"

Raghunātha has hung the nosepearl and sits still now. As a proud maidservant she waits until her mistress will order her: "What else will you put on Me?" Tulasī then says: "O Svarṇa-Gauri! On Your order I will give a string of new jewels in marriage to Your left armlet!" This string is very dear to Svāminī. She wears it for Śyāmasundara's welfare, thinking: "It is very auspicious for My Priyatama!" When She goes for Sūrya-*pūjā*, Svāminī thinks: "Let all dangers and obstacles of Śyāmasundara be destroyed! Let Him always freely play His erotic games with Me, and let His qualities of the Dhīra Lalita-hero increase!" This new string of jewels is sown on a silken band with flower-like tassles at each end. Tulasī thinks: "Let me marry that string with the armlet on Svāminī's left arm!", as if symbolising Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa's meeting with this act of service.[107] The *bhāva* and the *mūrti* are the same here. Tulasī does not join the new jewel-string to Śrīmatī's armlets, she establishes Śrīmatī's meeting with Śyāmasundara - She does not understand it![108] Śrīmatī is called Svarṇa-Gauri here because Her bodily effulgence paints the whole forest of Vṛndāvana golden like fresh Campaka-flowers: *nava campaka gaura kāntibhiḥ kṛta vṛndāvana hema rūpatam.* (Saṅgīta Madhava) "Worship that indescribable presiding goddess of love, world-enchanting Rādhā, who paints the naturally green environment of Vṛndāvana golden with Her own lustre, that resembles fresh Campaka-flowers!" Kiṅkarī Tulasī awakens an upsurge of Śyāmānurāga (passionate love for Kṛṣṇa) in that Rādhā, whose form is naturally beautiful.

Svāminī passionately stretches out Her left arm to grab the string of new jewels. Aha! How wonderful is the beauty of Her arm! Tulasī is enchanted. This is not a mundane arm. Some compare it with a golden lotusstem, and some say: *naite svarṇa mṛṇālake rati-pater ye pāśatam āgate*: 'These are not golden lotusstems, but Cupid's ropes!' (Govinda Līlāmṛta) These ropes are expert in embracing the black Tamāla-tree Kṛṣṇa. How many past sports with Priyatama is Tulasī awakening in Svāminī's memory! Blessed is this maidservant, the embodiment of love! How many ornaments of love isn't she using? With great attachment the devotee should meditate on the loving services he is rendering to His Īśvarī (goddess), who is dearer to him than millions of lives. It is not enough for the practising devotee to systematically memorize a quota of verses about these services and to remember the gradual *aṣṭa kāliya līlā* (Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa's eternal eightfold daily pastimes) without having actual love, devotion, humility, intuition and spiritual experience. That is not *rāgānugā bhakti*. This kind of devotion is not based on mere book knowledge or scriptural injunctions, but on divine passionate greed that arises after hearing about the activities of the people of Vraja, on the manifest plane (the six Gosvāmīs) and on the unmanifest plane (Nanda, Yaśodā, Rādhārāṇī, Rūpa Mañjarī etc.). *tad bhāva lipsunā kāryā vrajalokānusārataḥ* (Bhakti Rasāmṛta Sindhuḥ) Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī and Śrīla Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī are the greatest shelter for such spontaneous devotees. Without hearing their expert loving prayers for devotional service one's *sādhana* can not be

[107] The jewel string is female (*mālā*) and the armlet is male (*aṅgada*). Ed

[108] This paragraph is narrated by Śrī Ānanda Gopāla Gosvāmī.

beautiful and successful. How greatly Raghunātha suffers when he does not feel Svāminī's hand holding him! He laments and prays:

svarṇa-gauri sukumāri śuno vraja-bālā;paṭṭa vastra gucche diyā nava ratna-mālā
ājñā pāiyā vāma bhuje ānandita cite; viye dibo ratna-mālāra aṅgada sahite

"O hear me, tender golden girl of Vraja! When I receive Your order I will ecstatically marry Your *aṅgada* (armlet) with a *ratna-mālā* (jewel-string) with silken tassles at both ends, on Your left arm!" (Śrī Haripada Śila)

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VERSE 38:

KARṆAYOR UPARI CAKRA-ŚALĀKE
CAÑCALĀKṢI NIHITE MAYAKĀ TE
KṢOBHAKAṀ NIKHILA GOPA VADHŪNĀṀ
CAKRAVAD BHRAMAYATAṀ MURA-ŚATRUM

karṇayoḥ - both ears; *upari* - above; *cakra śalāke* - hoop earrings; *cañcalākṣi* - restless eyed girl; *nihite* - placed; *mayakā* - by this fallen maiden; *te* - Your; *kṣobhakaṁ* - agitating; *nikhila* - all; *gopa vadhūnām* - of the cowherdgirls; *cakravad* - like a disc; *bhramayataṁ* - making spin; *mura-śatrum* - the enemy of Mura, Kṛṣṇa.

O Cañcalākṣi (restless-eyed girl)! Although Muraśatru (Kṛṣṇa) agitates all the gopīs, I make Him spin like a disc with the disc-shaped hairpins that I place above Your ears!

Explanations: The visions of devotional service and the end of those visions follow Each other successively, creating simultaneously an amazing satisfaction and agony. This agony is a deeply relishable bliss. Although Śrīla Dāsa Gosvāmī is an eternal maidservant of Śrī Rādhikā he always feels as if he loves Her for the first time, regardless of what condition he is in. At every moment the awareness of a lack of direct meeting with the beloved deity arises in his heart. How great is his agony! "I have fallen on the bank of Your lake! Please take me to Your lotus feet, knowing me to be Your fallen maidservant!" The neophyte devotees must learn this eager devotional longing from him. The life of a devotee is naturally full of thoughts of the beloved deity and nothing else. His mind wants nothing and nobody else. Such intimicy with Śrī Rādhārāṇī cannot be attained while being engrossed in the mundane kingdom. "A person like me has left all his kith and kin far behind to go to Vraja, where his mind became absorbed in thinking of temporary things. I'm living in Vṛndāvana, where the birds are singing Śrī Rādhikā's glories, where the trees and vines shudder out of love for Śrī Rādhikā and where each speck of dust is sprinkled with the *mahā bhāva* that emanates from Śrī Rādhikā's footsoles - where is that realization?" Sensitive devotees experience the real form of Vraja, but fellows devoid of devotion see it as just an ordinary, mundane place. Therefore the practising devotees should give up their material conditionings and bring in their

transcendental conceptions. The soul thrives on *prema-rasa* and must relish that and attain the honey-sweet association of the Divine Couple.

Śrī Dāsa Gosvāmī sits on the bank of Śrī Rādhākuṇḍa and weeps for want of the direct, personal service of Śrīmatī Rādhikā, to whom he has offered his whole mind and heart. The Gosvāmīs have taught by example that if the mind wanders off elsewhere Svāminī is running off. "Why won't I become absorbed in You? Why can I not make my life a full success? I will purify my muddy mind with this *mahā-vāṇī*!" A person who thinks like that is a *bhakta-vīra* (devotee-hero). Śrī Raghunātha's life-airs reach his throat when he suffers the pain of love-in-separation. Just then he gets a vision; he's no longer Raghunātha, now he is Tulasī Mañjarī. "Svāmini! I have put these hoop-earrings above Your ears!" How wonderful is the slight smile that appears on Svāminī's face then! *niramala vadana, hāsa rasa parimale, malina sudhākara ambare roi* "When the spotted moon in the sky sees Rādhikā's spotless face scented with the *rasa* of laughter, he must cry." Tulasī serves without hesitation, and Svāminī also accepts her service without hesitation. Is this only a mental concoction? She accepts all service rendered within the mind. Śrī Dāsa Gosvāmī personally relished the sweet *rasa* of devotional service and taught: *vraje rādhā-Kṛṣṇa pracura paricaryām iha tanu* (Manaḥ Śikṣā 2) "Elaborately serve Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa in Vraja!" Serve the heart's friend of Śrī Rādhā within the mind, He will accept it all! This mental service is the very life-force of the externally rendered devotional service.[109] Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī has proven from the Padma Purāna that one who always serves Lord Hari mentally has direct association with He who is otherwise not perceived with (material) words and mind:

mānasenopacāreṇa paricarya hariṁ sadā
pare vāṅ manasāgamyam tam sākṣāt pratipedire

(Quotation from Padma Purāṇa in Bhakti Rasāmṛta Sindhuḥ)

In his commentary on this verse Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī quotes the story from the Brahma Vaivarta-Purāṇa about the *brāhmaṇa* from Pratiṣṭhāna-pura who mentally offered hot *kṣīra* (sweet rice) to the Lord, but burned his physical finger by touching it. The condensed form of *smaraṇa* is *dhyāna* (meditation) and the condensed form of meditation is *sphuraṇa* (transcendental visions). Śrīla Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī was a living example of that. It is mentioned in 'Bhakti Ratnākara' that he became sick one day, so Viṭṭhalnātha, the son of Vallabhācārya, called for a doctor, who said that Raghunātha Dāsa was suffering from indigestion. Viṭṭhalnātha, who knew that Raghunātha Dāsa was renunciation personified and that he hardly ate anything at all, refused to believe that, but the doctor insisted. Raghunātha Dāsa then confirmed the doctor's diagnosis, saying: "It is true. I had mentally offered *kṣīra* (sweet rice) to Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa and I mentally ate too much of the remnants of Their enjoyed food." This is one of several occasions in which the mental contact with God becomes physically manifest.

In a vivid vision Tulasī places hoop-earrings above Śrīmatī's ears. Śrīmatī is still absorbed in the placing of the jewel-string on Her left arm. Her body consists of *bhāva* and it is as if She searches for someone with Her restless eyes. Tulasī attracts Her mind by saying: "O Cañcalākṣi, restless-eyed girl! Your eyes restlessly go here and there, mistaking every object to be Kṛṣṇa! Hence I call You Cañcalāksī, or restless-eyed girl!" Svāminī says: "Tulasi! For whose sake have you ornamented Me?" Tulasī replies: "I will make Muraśatru, who agitates all the *gopīs* with His matchless all-attractive beauty and sweetness, spin around like a disc! When He cannot find His beloved anywhere He will come to You, spinning and spinning!"[110] That

[109] Until here this verse's explanation is given by Śrī Ānanda Gopāla Gosvāmī

[110] This paragraph is narrated by Śrī Ānanda Gopāla Gosvāmī.

Kṛṣṇa, who is very anxious to meet Rādhārāṇī, is very dear to the *mañjarīs*. The *kiṅkarīs* are very proud of the sweet form of their mistress, and they say: "I will bring Muraśatru here, spinning like a disc, by attracting Him with these disc-shaped hoop-earrings!" In *pūrva rāga* a *dūtī* describes Śyāmasundara's condition to Śrīmatī when He anxiously searches for Her:

campaka dāma heri, cita ati kampita,
locana bohe anurāga
tuya rūpa antare, jāgaye nirantara,
dhani dhani tohāri sohāga

"O Rādhe! When Kṛṣṇa sees the golden garland of Campaka-flowers that Subala gives Him, His mind trembles and tears of passionate love flow from His eyes. O beautiful, fortunate girl! Your form always awakens great love in His heart!"

vṛṣabhānu nandini, japaye rāti dini
bharama nā bolaye ān.
lākho lākho dhani, bolaye madhura vāṇī,
svapane na pātaye kān.

"Day and night He murmurs: 'Vṛṣabhānu Nandini!' without saying anything else. Although hundreds of thousands of fortunate girls speak sweet words to Him He does not listen to them even in dreams!"

'rā' kohi 'dhā' pahuṁ, kohoi na pāroi,
dhara dhari bohe lora
soi purukh maṇi, loṭāya dharaṇī puna,
ko koho ārati ora

"He can only pronounce the first syllable of Your name, 'Rā', but out of ecstasy He can not pronounce the other one, 'Dhā'. His eyes carry streams of tears. That jewel of men rolls on the ground . Who can describe His distress?"

govinda dāsa tuyā, caraṇe nivedalo,
kānuka etohuṁ saṁvāda
nīcaye jānaho, tachu dukha khaṇḍaka,
kevala tuyā parasāda.

"Govinda Dāsa submits this news about Kānu (Kṛṣṇa) to Your lotus feet: Know that He feels miserable and that only Your grace can destroy His suffering!"

Tulasī says: "Although it is just an insignificant ornament it will still cause Kṛṣṇa to spin around after I put it on You! That was my intention! I wanted to agitate Him and make Him spin around like this, searching and searching for You until He meets You!" Kṛṣṇa is very dear to the *mañjarīs* when He becomes anxious to meet Srī Rādhikā. The heart of the *kiṅkarī* is filled with pride when she sees the sweet form of her mistress, and she says: "These disc-like earrings will make Muraśatru spin like a disc and bring Him to You!" How many hundreds of experiences of Kṛṣṇa Tulasī gives to Svāminī in this way! The word *mayakā* in the text is a sign of humility: 'I am not qualified to serve You, but You are all-merciful and You have accepted this *sevikā* (maidservant)! Alas! Although You are anxious to meet Śyāma, I have not been able to bring Him here! How unfortunate I am! Despite all this, You are full of love (*premamayī*), and I have placed these disc-shaped hair-pins above Your ears to pull Śyāma towards You, spinning and spinning! I will agitate even Muraśatru, who can agitate all the *gopīs*!" In the

night of the Rāsa-dance the *gopīs* personally expressed how agitated they were by seeing Kṛṣṇa's beauty and sweetness:

vīkṣyālakāvṛta mukhaṁ tava kuṇḍala-śrī gaṇḍa-sthalādhara sudhaṁ hasitāvalokam
dattābhayaṁ ca bhuja daṇḍayugaṁ vilokya vakṣaḥ śriyaika ramaṇaṁ ca bhavāma dāsyaḥ

(Śrīmad Bhāgavata 10.29.39)

"O beautiful one! When we saw Your beautiful face, flanked by curly locks and beautiful earrings dangling on Your cheeks, Your nectarean lips, Your glances that are beautified by slight smiles, Your strong rod-like arms that grant fearlessness and Your most attractive chest, we became Your maidservants!" How amazing is the way in which Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu relished this verse later in the mood of the *gopīs*!

kṛṣṇa jiti padma-cānda, pātiyāche mukha-phāṅd,
tāte adhara madhu smita cāra.
vraja-nārī āsi āsi, phāṅde pori hoy dāsī
chāḍi nija pati ghara dvāra

"Kṛṣṇa's face, that defeats the lotus and the moon, has spread out a net and has placed the nectar of His smiling lips in it as a bait. The girls of Vraja come there, fall in it and become His maidservants, giving up their homes and their husbands."

bāndhava! Kṛṣṇa kore vyādhera ācāra
nāhi gaṇe dharmādharma, hare nārī mṛgī marma,
kore nānā upāya tāhāra

"O friend! Kṛṣṇa behaves like a hunter! Not counting what is virtue and vice He steals the hearts of the doe-like *gopīs* through different means!"

gaṇḍa-sthala jhalamala, nāce makara kuṇḍala,
sei nṛtye hare nārī-caya
sasmita katākṣa bāṇe, tā sabhāra hṛdaye hāne,
nārī vadhe nāhi kichu bhaya

"His dancing Makara-earrings shimmer on His cheeks and their dancing steals the hearts of the girls. His smiling glances are like arrows that pierce their hearts. He's not at all afraid to commit the crime of killing women!"

ati ucca suvistāra, lakṣmī śrīvatsa alaṅkāra,
kṛṣṇera ye ḍākātiyā vakṣa.
vraja-devī lakṣa lakṣa, tā sabhāra manovakṣa
hari dāsī koribāre dakṣa

"Kṛṣṇa's broad and raised chest, that is decorated with the goddesss of fortune and the Śrīvatsa-sign, is like a dacoit that is expert in turning the minds and the breasts of hundreds of thousands of Vraja-*devīs* into Hari's maidservants."

subalita dīrghārgala, Kṛṣṇa bhuja yugala
bhuja nahe - Kṛṣṇa sarpa kāya
dui śaila chidre poiśe, nārīra hṛdaye daṁśe,

mare nārī se viṣa jvālāya

"Kṛṣṇa's long and strong arms are like bolts. They are not arms - they are the bodies of black snakes, penetrating in the holes of the *gopīs*' breasts and biting their hearts, making them die of the burning poison."

Kṛṣṇa kara padatala, koṭi candra suśītala,
jiti karpūra veṇāmūla candana
eka bāra yāra sparśe, smara jvālā viṣa nāśe,
yāra sparśe lubdha nārīra mana

"Kṛṣṇa's handpalms and footsoles are cooler than millions of moons, camphor, Veṇāmūla (vertiver) and sandalwoodpulp. Anyone who touches them just once has the burning sensation of Cupid's poison destroyed and therefore all the girls desire this touch."

Tulasī prattles: "Although Śyāma can enchant the *gopīs* in such a way, the ornaments I decorate You with will enchant even Him!" The *ācāryas* performed *bhajan* and they also preached. They were exemplary in both. They closed the door of the house and cried, and sometimes they wandered from *kuñja* to *kuñja* and cried. The Mahājanas sing:

cheḍā kāṅthā mātra gāy, mukhe rādhā-Kṛṣṇa gāy
paridhāne cheḍā bahirvāsa
kabhu kāṅde kabhu hāse, kabhu premānande bhāse
kabhu bhikṣā kabhu upavāsa

"They wore only torn quilts and torn outer garments on their bodies, but their mouths were always singing 'Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa!' Sometimes they cried, sometimes they laughed, sometimes they floated in loving ecstasy, sometimes they begged some food and sometimes they fasted."

vrajapure ghare ghare, madhukarī bhikṣā kore,
eirūpa katho dina thāke
gaurāṅgera yoto guṇa, kohe rūpa-sanātana,
hā nātha hā nātha boli ḍāke

"For some days Śrī Rūpa and Sanātana begged alms from door to door in Vraja and glorified all of Lord Gaurāṅga's qualities, calling out to Him: 'O Lord! O Lord!"

tāhā chāḍi kuñje kuñje, preme rādhā-kṛṣṇe khoñje
phala mūla koroye bhakṣaṇe
uccaiḥsvare ārta nāde, rādhā-Kṛṣṇa boli kāṅde,
ei rūpa thāke katho dina

"Then they gave this up and began to eat just fruits and roots, looking for Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa in every *kuñja*. Anxiously they cried out loud: "Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa!" This they maintained for some days."

koto dina antarmanā, chāpānna daṇḍa bhāvanā,
cāri daṇḍa nidrā vṛksa tale
svapne rādhā-Kṛṣṇa dekhe, nāma gāne sadā thāke,
avasara nāhi eka tile

"For some days they meditated 22 hours a day and slept only two hours under a tree. But even then they dreamt of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa, always singing their names. In this way they

would not waste even a second." How am I spending my days, having gotten *ācāryas* like that! By doing *bhajan* some realizations will come. The reflection of the forms, qualities and pastimes of the Divine Couple will be attained, as well as the awareness of the flavour of Their compassion. The Gosvāmīs say that the best practice is to become attached to the pastimes of the beloved deity. The mind will slowly but surely proceed towards Svāminī's lotus feet by hearing and chanting about these pastimes. After Śrī Raghunātha placed the hoop-earrings the vision stops and this makes him cry and lament.
Śrī Rasika-Candra Dāsa sings:

cañcala nayani rādhe, ei mora mano sādhe,
tuya pade kori nivedana
karṇa dvaye camatkāra, cakraśālā alaṅkāra
korechi ye sukhe samarpaṇa.

"O restless-eyed Rādhe! I submit my desire to Your lotus feet: I blissfully want to decorate Your ears with astonishing disc-shaped hairpins!"

nikhila gopīra mona, kore ye vimohana,
sei śyāma cāṅde anāyāse.
sarvadā cakrera nyāya, bhramaṇa korābe hāy,
se śobhāra daraśa piyāse

"They will easily cause that black moon (Kṛṣṇa), who enchants the minds of all the *gopīs*, to constantly spin around like a disc! I am very eager to witness such a beautiful scene!"

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VERSE 39:

KADĀ TE MṚGA ŚĀVĀKṢI CIBUKE MṚGA NĀBHINĀ
BINDUM ULLĀSAYIṢYĀMI MUKUNDĀMODA MANDIRE

kadā - when; *te* - Your; *mṛga śāvākṣi* - O fawn-eyed girl!; *cibuke* - on the chin; *mṛga nābhinā* - with musk (obtained from the navel of a deer); *bindum* - drop; *ullāsayiṣyāmi* - I will gladden; *mukunda* - Mukunda; *amoda* - bliss; *mandire* - in the abode.

O Mṛga Śāvākṣi (fawn-eyed girl)! When can I beautify Your chin, that is the abode of Mukunda's bliss, with a drop of musk?

Explanations: During a transcendental vision Śrī Raghunātha, in *svarūpāveśa*, hangs disc-shaped hairpins above Śrīmatī's ears, and now he proceeds by placing a musk-drop on Her chin. When the vision of placing the hairpins disappears Raghunātha dāsa laments. The pain of separation that a *jāta-prema* devotee (a devotee whose love for Kṛṣṇa has awakened) feels is very intense, no doubt, but Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī is in the kingdom of *mahā bhāva* (far beyond that). When the devotee reaches the stage of *rati* he gets visions of the Lord's forms and qualities and he experiences great transcendental ecstasy. But when the stage

of *prema* is attained there is not so much bliss felt from perceiving the Lord's form in a *sphūrti* anymore. The mind then becomes greedy after something even more special - that is the attainment of the Lord's direct *darśana*. Śrī Raghunātha dāsa is on the level of *mahā bhāva*, so his heart is always filled with great eagerness to see the Lord directly. Between *sphūrti* (visions) and *sākṣāt darśana* (direct seeing) there is an medium-stage which is called *sākṣātkāra kalpa* or *visphūrti*, a more vivid kind of *sphūrti*. All the transcendental visions of Śrī Raghunātha dāsa are in that category. Both in his external consciousness and during transcendental visions he is focused on Śrī Rādhā's lotus feet. Wherever there is full surrender there can be no question of a division of interests. The perfection of *prema* cannot be attained by thinking: "I will give something to my body and my family, and the rest I will give to my beloved deity." Everything must be surrendered to the lotus feet of the beloved deity! A devotee must take shelter unequivocally. *niṣkapaṭe nā bhajinu tomā* (Śrī Narottama dāsa) "O Lord! I did not worship You without hidden motives!" If there are any other motives within the heart it is called deceitfulness. Without being free from ulterior motives the *prema sādhanā* cannot be done. The desire for distinction is a great enemy of the practising devotee. Even a person who has renounced everything may desire to touch the hog-stool of the desire for distinction: "I'm a great scholar, I'm very qualified, I'm very wise, I'm absorbed in *bhajan*, I'm very famous! I will lord it over everyone and thus become very happy!" These desires are called *pratiṣṭhāśā*, or desire for distinction, and there's no greater obstacle to the development of devotion than that. This desire is like a band of pirates that enters the boat of *sādhanā* and plunders it, dragging it down to hell. In his 'Manaḥ Śikṣā (teachings for the mind)' Śrī Raghunātha dāsa writes:

pratiṣṭhāśā dhṛṣṭā śvapaca ramaṇī me hṛdi naṭet
kathaṁ sādhu-prema spṛśati śucir etan nanu manaḥ
sadā tvaṁ sevasva prabhu dayita sāmantam atulam
yathā tām niṣkāśya tvaritam iha taṁ veśayati saḥ

"O mind! The shameless dogeating woman of the desire for prestige, distinction and position is dancing in my heart. How can beautiful pure *prema* ever touch it then? Therefore always serve the matchless leading devotees who are dear to the Lord, so that this pariah woman can quickly be chased out of the heart and *prema* may enter it!"

nā koriho asat ceṣṭā, lābha pūjā pratiṣṭhā,
sadā cinta govinda caraṇa
sakala vipatti yābe, mahānanda sukha pābe,
prema bhakti parama kāraṇa

(Prema Bhakti Candrikā)

"Do not endeavour for the false, like profit, adoration and distinction. Always think of Govinda's lotus feet! All calamities will then go and you will become very happy. This is the greatest cause for loving devotion!" Unequivocal surrender cannot take place when we keep on pulling between different interests. "I am Śrī Rādhā's maidservant! I don't have a relationship with anyone else!" This kind of loyalty will arise in the heart of a pure, independent devotee. Śrī Raghunātha dāsa falls on the bank of Rādhākuṇḍa and weeps. What to do, how to become Śrī Rādhārāṇī's beloved, that must be learned from the *ācāryas*.

Tulasī is in the kingdom of *līlā*. Holding a cup with musk in her left hand and a brush in her right hand, she stands before Svāminī, wearing Her leftover glistening blue *sārī*. Svāminī mercifully gave her the *sārī* because She was very much satisfied with Tulasī's service. How beautiful she looks in it! Seeing Svāminī's playful eyebrows and eyes, Tulasī calls Her *mṛga*

śāvākṣi (fawn-eyed girl). She holds the cup with fragrant musk close to Svāminī's nose so that She will remember Kṛṣṇa's bodily fragrance. While Her eyes, that extend to Her ears, move around restlessly, Svāminī asks Tulasī: "Where does that fragrance come from? I understand that My Priyatama is coming!"

kasturī lipta nīlotpala, tāra yei parimala,
tāhā jini Kṛṣṇa aṅga gandha
vyāpe caudde bhuvane, kore sarva ākarṣaṇe,
nārīgaṇera āṅkhi kore andha

"The fragrance of Kṛṣṇa's body defeats that of a blue lotus flower anointed with musk. This fragrance pervades all the fourteen worlds and attracts everyone, blinding the eyes of the girls!"

sakhi he! Kṛṣṇa gandha jagat mātāy
nārīra nāsāya poiśe, sarva kāla tāhā boise,
Kṛṣṇa pāśe dhari loiyā yāy

"O *sakhi*! Kṛṣṇa's fragrance maddens the world! It enters the womens nostrils and always remains sitting there, holding them and taking them to Kṛṣṇa!"

hare nārīra tanu mana, nāsā kore ghūrṇana,
khasāya nīvī, chuṭāya keśa bandha.
kori āge bāurī, nācāya jagat nārī,
heno ḍākāti Kṛṣṇa aṅga gandha.

(Caitanya Caritāmṛta Antya 19)

"It steals the bodies and minds of women and makes their noses twirl. The women of the world then become like madwomen whose braids and girdles loosen of agitation. That's how the highwayman of Kṛṣṇa's bodily fragrance is!"

Śrīmatī is agitated by smelling the musk and She shows many sweet emotions through the expressions on Her face and in Her eyes. Tulasī then says: "O Fawn-eyed girl! He who becomes agitated from the smell of this musk, has not come!" Hearing 'He has not come', Svāminī becomes upset and it is as if Her heart breaks, but Tulasī makes Śyāma appear in the form of the muskdrop on Her chin. "You know what this chin of Yours is? It is the temple of Mukunda's bliss! He frees You from whatever You have - that's why He is Mukunda!", Tulasī prattles. Hearing this, Svāminī is overwhelmed and She sits still, so that Tulasī seizes her opportunity and puts the muskdrop on Her chin. How wonderfully this muskdrop blazes there, like a baby-blackbee drinking honey from a golden lotus flower! Tulasī says: "He (Kṛṣṇa) is black, the drop is also black! That drop has now attained its rightful place! Kṛṣṇa will become jealous of that drop. The owner of the temple will come and fade that drop out by kissing Your chin! And that's exactly what I want!" Being fully surrendered to Her, the maidservants know exactly what is on Svāminī's *mahā-bhāva*-mind, and they serve Her accordingly. By Svāminī's grace they know exactly what She needs! "I call myself a maidservant, but still Svāminī does not respond! As soon as my mind and my heart become qualified She will certainly respond! I can't eat, I can't sleep, I'm crying for Her day and night! Can merciful Svāminī remain silent and callous, although She sees all this?" In Śrīmad Bhāgavata (9.4.65) Śrī Nārāyaṇa told Durvāsā Muni:

ye dārāgāra putrāpta prāṇān vittam imaṁ param
hitvā māṁ śaraṇaṁ yātāḥ kathaṁ tāms tyaktum utsahe

"How can I forsake My devotees who have given up their wives, homes, children, relatives and wealth to surrender unto Me?" And Svāminī is the embodiment of compassion! A *puruṣa* (a man, or the Supreme Lord) bestows his mercy after due consideration, but Svāminī is an *apāra dayāvatī*, an endlessly merciful goddess, and She bestows Her mercy without any consideration! Her compassion will certainly descend when She hears a devotee anxiously praying: "My heart is blinded by illusion! Please purify me and give me shelter at Your lotus feet!" This is why Gaura is so merciful - He has accepted the mood and complexion of Śrī Rādhā! Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī is the full receptacle of Śrī Gaura's grace. He cannot even swallow a little water anymore: "I did not see Svāminī! What's the use of staying alive?"

kāṅde gosāi rātri dine, puḍi yāya tanu mane,
kṣaṇe aṅga dhūlāya dhūṣara
cakṣu andha anāhāra, āpanāra deha bhāra,
virahe hoilo jara jara

(Pada Kalpataru)

"Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī wept day and night. His body and mind were burning, and his body was greyed by dust. He had gone blind from fasting, and his body, that felt to him like a mere burden, was burning in the fire of separation!"

Although we may repeat the words of the *ācāryas* our prayers to Svāminī's lotus feet must become pure. There seems to be no practice more delightful than this. Those who want to make their *bhajan* a success must depend on this *vāṇī*, these great words. Each syllable crystallizes one-pointed loyalty to Rādhā's lotus feet.[111]

Tulasī lovingly makes many luscious jokes while putting the musk-drop on Svāminī's chin. This drop makes the natural beauty of Śrī Rādhikā's face even more brilliant! Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī writes in Kṛṣṇa Bhāvanāmṛta (4.74):

madhurimābdhi bhavasya sudhānidhau yad iha Kṛṣṇa ruciḥ pṛṣato'ṅkitaḥ
tad avagamya sa Kṛṣṇa imaṁ nijaṁ sarasayan rasayan ramayen muhuḥ

"This blue drop is like the full moon rising from an ocean of sweetness. Seeing this, Kṛṣṇa will consider it to be a seal declaring it to be His, and He will personally come to rejoice in experiencing its flavour again and again!" Tulasī brings strong emotions into Svāminī's heart, that is suffering separation. Blessed is her expertise in devotional service! How many memories of different pastimes doesn't Tulasī awaken in Svāminī's heart! When she holds Svāminī's chin she suddenly doesn't get anything anymore and her heart immerses in an ocean of love-in-separation as she anxiously laments: "To whom shall I give this musk-drop now?"

he mṛgākṣi! śrī govinda keli ārādhike! pramoda mandira divya tomāra cibuke
kobe dibo jhalamala mṛgamada bindu; vadanera śobhā yeno ṣola kalā indu

"O fawn-eyed girl! O worshiper of Śrī Govinda's play! When will I put a glistening musk-drop on Your chin, that is like a divine temple of bliss, so that Your face will become as beautiful as the moon with all its sixteen digits?" {Śrī Haripada Śila}

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[111] From 'unequivocal surrender....' down to here the explanation is by Śrī Ānanda Gopāla Gosvāmī.

VERSE 40:

DAŚANAṀS TE KADĀ RAKTA REKHĀBHIR BHŪṢAYĀMY AHAM
DEVI MUKTĀPHALĀNĪHA PADMARĀGA GUṆAIR IVA

daśanaṁ - teeth; *te* - Your; *kadā* - when; *rakta* - red; *rekhābhiḥ* - with lines; *bhūṣayāmi* - will adorn; *aham* - I; *devi* - O Goddess!; *muktā-phalāni* - of a pearl; *iha* - here; *padmarāga* - ruby; *gunaiḥ* - with strings; *iva* - as if.

O Devi (Goddess)! When will I decorate Your teeth with reddish lines, making them look just like pearls with lines of ruby on them?

Explanations: The stream of Śrī Raghunātha's transcendental visions flows on. This time he serves Svāminī's row of teeth, saying: "O goddess! When will I decorate Your teeth with reddish lines, making them look just like pearls with lines of ruby on them?" Śrī Raghunātha's heart is filled with an amazing eagerness to serve his Svāminījī. Just as food does not taste sweet when one is not hungry, the flavour of devotional service is not astonishing when there is no eagerness in the devotee's heart. Svāminī stood behind Raghunātha to relish the sweetness of His eager and earnest devotion, She did not show Herself in front of him![112] The Lord enjoys the eagerness of His devotees.

bhaktera prema vikāra dekhi kṛṣṇera camatkāra;
Kṛṣṇa yāra nā pāya anta kevā chāra āra

"Kṛṣṇa is astonished when He sees the devotees' loving transformations. Even Kṛṣṇa cannot find the limit to their loving ecstasy, what to speak of ordinary living beings?" {C.C.} Therefore Svāminī increases the ocean of Raghunātha's *prema* by making him more eager. Śrī Raghunātha's heart is very eager to attain the personal service of Śrī Rādhā's lotus feet. By crying in a heart-rending way for Svāminī he caused Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī's heart to melt. Therefore Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī ended his 'Dāna Keli Kaumudī' with the following prayer for Raghunātha's sake:

rādhākuṇḍa taṭī kuṭīra vasatis tyaktānya karma janaḥ
sevām eva samakṣam atra yuvayor yaḥ kartum utkaṇṭhate
vṛndāraṇya samṛddhi dohada pada krīḍā kaṭākṣa dyute
tarṣākhyā tarur asya mādhava phalī tūrṇaṁ vidheyas tvayā

"O Mādhava! My friend (Raghunātha Dāsa) has given up all other activities and is now living in a cottage on the bank of Rādhākuṇḍa, very anxious to exclusively serve You and Śrī Rādhikā. You always cast Your merciful glance on those who live in Vṛndāvana and You fulfill all their desires, so please make the tree of his (Raghunātha's) aspirations bear fruit soon!" In this Vilāpa Kusumāñjali Śrī Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī offers flower-like lamentations at Śrīmatī's lotus feet and renders loving devotional service to Her. With love-steeped minds and

[112] This refers to the pastime of Śrī Rādhikā shading Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī with Her own veil when he meditated upon Her on the bank of Śyāmakuṇḍa once. This is described in Bhakti Ratnākara, Fifth Wave.

eyes the *rāgānugā*-devotees should see and relish the picture drawn with *bhāva* of the intense suffering the maidservant goes through day and night when she is separated from her beloved mistress. How much relish and how many hundreds of different moods are revealed in these lamentations-of-separation can be learned from Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu's lamentations in the Gambhīrā-pastimes:

korite aiche vilāpa, uṭhilo udvega bhāva,
mone kāho nāhi ālambana.
udvega viṣāda mati, autsukye trāsa dhṛti smṛti,
nānā bhāvera hoilo milana

(Caitanya Caritāmṛta Antya 17)

"While Mahāprabhu lamented in this way agitation and ecstasy awoke in His heart and He could not find any support or hold in His mind. Different ecstasies, like eagerness, lamentation, fear, attention, complacency and remembrance met in His heart." It was in the ecstasy of Śrī Rādhā that all these *sañcārī-bhāvas* arose in the heart of the Lord, who is known as Bhāva Nidhi, the ocean of transcendental ecstasies. This is also called *bhāva-śābalya*, or a clashing of different contradicting emotions. Just as a vision of Kṛṣṇa appeared in His mind the strong eagerness to attain Him conquered all the other feelings and took place like a king on the throne of the Lord's heart.

autsukyera prāviṇye, jiti anya bhāva sainye,
udoya koilo nija rājya mane
mone hoilo lālasa, nā hoy āpana vaśa,
duḥkhe mone korena bhartsane

"His highly developed eagerness conquered all other soldiers of ecstasy and an uncontrollable desire arose in the kingdom of His mind. Then he sadly rebuked His own mind."

mana mora vāma dīna, jala vinā yeno mīna,
Kṛṣṇa vinā kṣaṇe mori yāya
madhura hāsya vadane, mana netra rasāyane,
Kṛṣṇa tṛṣṇā dviguṇa bāḍāya

"Without Kṛṣṇa My poor mind will die within a moment, just like a fish out of water. Kṛṣṇa's sweetly smiling face, which is like a reviving elixir for the mind and eyes, doubles My thirst for Kṛṣṇa."

hā hā Kṛṣṇa prāṇa dhana, hā hā padma-locana
hā hā divya sad guṇa sāgara
hā hā śyāma-sundara, hā hā pītāmbara dhara,
hā hā rāsa vilāsa nāgara

"O Kṛṣṇa, treasure of My heart! O lotus-eyed One! O ocean of divine qualities! O Śyāmasundara! O wearer of the yellow *dhotī*! O hero of the Rāsa-*līlā*!"

kāhā gele tomā pāi, tumi koho - tāhā yāi,
eto kohi colilā dhāiyā
svarūpa uṭhi kole kori, prabhure ānila dhari,
nija sthāne bosāilā loiyā

"Where should I go to find You? Tell Me, and I will go there!" Saying this, Mahāprabhu began to run. Svarūpa got up, though, and brought the Lord back on his lap. Then Svarūpa brought the Lord back to His own place and seated Him there."

Because Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī is the receptacle of Mahāprabhu's full grace different waves of *bhāva*, headed by eagerness, are seen to arise in him also. In a transcendental vision Śrī Raghunātha dāsa says: '*devi*!' Tulasī sees how much Srīmatī's sweetness increases because she awoke the remembrance of the *līlā-rasa* in Her heart while putting the musk-drop on Her chin, hence she calls Her *devi. devī kohe dyotamānā paramā sundarī* (C.C.) "*Devi* means effulgent and most beautiful girl." Tulasī will now draw red lines on Svāminī's teeth. Śrī Rādhikā sits on a golden seat and extends Her matchless bodily lustre. Tulasī holds her left hand on Śrīmatī's head and slightly lifts Her moonlike face. Holding a brush in her right hand Tulasī makes red lines on Śrīmatī's white teeth with deep concentration, saying: "Your teeth are just like pomegranate-seeds that will attract the parrot from Vṛndāvana! Their bright effulgence will destroy the darkness of His lonely despair!" Seeing the red lines on Śrīmatī's teeth, Tulasī is astonished and says: "Aha! How beautiful Your teeth are! They look just like pearls with lines of ruby on them! They will act just to increase the greed of the parrot from Vṛndāvana! If He can enjoy this, then all My endeavours are successful!" When Svāminī hears Tulasī's words, She imagines that Śyāma is sitting at Her feet, praying to Her in great humility and with tearfilled eyes:

vadasi yadi kiñcid api danta ruci kaumudī harati dara timiram ati ghoram
sphurad adhara sīdhave tava vadana candramā rocayati locana cakoram
priye ! cāru śile ! muñca mayi mānam anidānam !
sapadi madanānalo dahati mama mānasam dehi mukha kamala madhupānam

"If You say even the slightest thing the moonlight of Your beautiful teeth will take away the dense darkness! The nectar of Your lips, that emanates from Your moonlike face, pleases My Cakora-bird-like eyes. O beloved! O Girl with the beautiful nature! Give up Your causeless pique! My mind burns in the fire of lust! Please give Me the honey-drink from Your lotus-like face!" {Gīta Govindam}

Tulasī's prattling crystallizes Śyāma before Svāminī. How many pastimes can she awaken within Svāminī's memory! Now it is as if Svāminī is *Kṛṣṇa krīḍā pūjāra vasati nagarī*, the empress of the town of Kṛṣṇa's play and worship. That's why Tulasī calls Her *devi*. Tulasī draws red lines on Svāminī's teeth and is astonished by their beauty, saying: "Aha! How beautiful are Your teeth! They look just like pearls with lines of ruby on them! All these endeavours are made to increase the greed of the Kṛṣṇa-parrot. When He can relish this all my endeavours have become worthwhile!" The beauty of this peerless service must be learned from the Gosvāmīs. It is the service of *mahā-bhāva* and must be understood through *mahā bhāva*. Where are the insignificant living entities, and where is that *mahā-bhāva*, the essence of love of God? But now, in this particular age of Kali, the afflicted souls have become so fortunate to enter into this kingdom of *mahā-bhāva*, which is otherwise difficult to access, by the special mercy of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. Being empowered by Mahāprabhu the Gosvāmīs have revealed this kingdom, and the only way to get the great fortune of relishing Svāminī's devotional service is to follow in their footsteps. *rasa* can only be understood through personal experience and it can only be attained by the mercy of the *rasika* devotees. The desired *līlā-kathā* (talks about Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa's pastimes) cannot be done with others than with *rasika* devotees. Even the Lord Himself is very greedy to taste these topics with the *rasika* devotees. Mahāprabhu told Śrī Rāmānanda Rāya:

tumi āmi nīlācale rahibo eka saṅge;
sukhe kāṭāibo kāla Kṛṣṇa-kathā raṅge (C.C.)

"You and I will stay together at Purī and blissfully spend the time speaking about Kṛṣṇa!" The *ācāryas* are extraordinary knowers of *rasa* and by associating with their *vāṇī* (words) one associates with them directly. Relishing their sweet words in the company of like-minded saintly *rasika* devotees is both the means and the goal. For the *yogīs* the Lord said this in Bhagavad Gītā (6.10):

yogī yuñjīta satatam ātmānaṁ rahasi sthitaḥ
ekākī yata cittātmā nirāśīr aparigrahaḥ

"The *yogī* always remains within himself in a lonely place, controlling his senses and his mind, free from desires and not taking anything for himself." In the Sāṅkhya-darśana there is a verse saying *bahubhir yoge virodho rāgādibhiḥ kumārī śaṅkhavat* "When you live with many people together, anger and conflicts will arise and the resultant quarrel will ruin your *yoga*-practice, just as the maiden's bangles will always jingle as long as she moves her hands, and as long as she wears even more than one bangle on each wrist." But when the Lord discusses the devotional practice of the devotees He says:

mac cittā mad gata prāṇā bodhayantaḥ parasparam
kathayantaś ca māṁ nityaṁ tuṣyanti ca ramanti ca

"My devotees have given their minds and their hearts to Me. They converse about Me with Each other and always enlighten Each other. This keeps them very happy and satisfied." (Bhagavad Gītā 10.9) Tulasī is the embodiment of deep love and affection and she is immersed in the flavours of the devotional service of Mahā-bhāvamayī Rādhikā. Suddenly the vision vanishes and Śrī Raghunātha anxiously prays:

he devi padmarāga maṇite nirmita; sūtra dvārā muktāphala hoy suśobhita
gaja-muktā pāṅkti jini tomāra daśane; bhūṣita koribo rakta varṇa rekhā gaṇe

"O Goddess! Your teeth defeat even the big Gaja-muktā-pearls in beauty. When will I ornament them with red-colored lines that make them look like pearls surrounded by strings of ruby?" {Śrī Haripada Śīla}

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VERSE 41:

UTKHĀDIREṆA NAVA CANDRA VIRĀJITENA
RĀGEṆA TE VARA SUDHĀDHARA BIMBA-YUGME
GĀṄGEYA-GĀTRI MAYAKĀ PARIRAÑJITE'SMIN
DAṀŚAṀ VIDHĀSYATI HAṬHĀT KIM U KṚṢṆA-KĪRA

utkhādireṇa - with catechu; *nava* - fresh; *candra* - camphor; *virājitena* - with shining; *rāgeṇa* - with colour: *te* - Your; *vara* - excellent; *sudhā* - nectar; *adhara* - lips; *bimba* - Bimba fruits; *yugme* - on the couple; *gāṅgeya* - golden; *gātrī* - (fem.) body; *mayakā* - by me; *parirañjite* - colored: *asmin* - in this; *daṁśaṁ* - bite; *vidhāsyati* - will do; *haṭhāt* - by force, or suddenly; *kim u* - whether; *Kṛṣṇa* - Kṛṣṇa; *kīra* - parrot.

O Gāṅgeya Gātri (girl with a golden body)! When will I colour Your excellent nectarlike lips, that are red like Bimbafruits, with lipstick of catechu mixed with fresh camphor? Will the Kṛṣṇa-parrot suddenly come then and forcibly bite them?

Explanations: Śrī Raghunātha's prayers for devotional service, that are resting in his heart, flow on like a clear stream of ever-increasing emotions. It is as if Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī sits in his heart and soothes it. A wonderful relish of love of Kṛṣṇa can be tasted while serving Priyājī's (Rādhikā's) lotus feet on the bank of Her *kuṇḍa*. Without worshiping Śrī Rādhā's lotus feet and taking shelter of Her divine abode, Kṛṣṇa's sweetness cannot be relished. Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa writes in his Sva Saṅkalpa Prakāśa stotram (1):

anārādhya rādhā padāmbhoja reṇum anāśritya vṛndāṭavīṁ tat padāṅkām
asambhāṣya tad bhāva gambhīra cittān kutaḥ śyāma-sindho rasasyāvagāhaḥ

"Without worshiping the dust of Rādhā's lotus feet, without taking shelter of Vṛndāvana, where Her footprints are lying, and without conversing with those whose hearts are filled with deep love for Her, how can anyone enter into the Śyāma-ocean?" Śrīpāda Prabodhānanda Sarasvatī says: "Those who give up Rādhā's service and try only to taste Kṛṣṇa's sweetness only attain a drop of the ocean of nectar" (Rādhā Rasa Sudhānidhi, 80). In this connection it is said that once the worldfamous Vedāntik *sannyāsī* Madhusūdana Sarasvatī came to Vraja and gave a note with the words *Kṛṣṇa sindhu* (the Kṛṣṇa-ocean) on it to some bypassing *sādhu*, asking him to bring this note to the leading scholar of Vraja and to bring the reply of that scholar back to him. At that time the leading scholar of Vraja was Śrī Jīva Gosvāmī. When the *sādhu* handed him the note, Śrī Jīva wrote a verse on the back, saying: "What will you do in the Kṛṣṇa-ocean without worshiping Śrī Rādhā's lotus feet and the dust of Vraja, that was trampled by these feet?" In this way the *ācāryas* show that Kṛṣṇa's sweetness can only be really be tasted by serving Śrī Rādhikā.

In a transcendental revelation Śrī Raghunātha says: "Ayi Gāṅgeya Gātri! O Golden-limbed girl! When can I color Your nectarean Bimbafruit-like lips with lipstick made of catechu scented with nice fresh camphor?" Śrī Rādhā's lips are naturally reddish, so why do they still need lipstick? For this one must know what's on the mind of the *sevya*, the worshipable deity. Śrī Rādhā is full of *mahā bhāva*. It is natural for Her to make Kṛṣṇa relish *śṛṅgāra rasa. Kṛṣṇake korāya śyāmarasa madhupāna; nirantara pūrna kore kṛṣṇera sarva kāma* (C.C.): "She makes Kṛṣṇa drink the honeydrink of *śyāma-rasa* (erotic flavours), and She always fulfills all of Kṛṣṇa's desires." The Gosvāmīs prayed to Śrī Rādhā: "Please personally teach me how to serve You more expertly!"

hari padanakha koṭī pṛṣṭha paryanta sīmā taṭam api kalayantīṁ prāṇa koṭer abhiṣṭām
pramudita madirākṣīvṛnda vaidagdhya dīkṣā gurumati guru kīrtiṁ rādhikām arcayāmi

(Rūpa Gosvāmī's Rādhāṣṭakam, 7)

"I worship Śrī Rādhikā, who considers the tip of Śrī Hari's toenail millions of times more dear than Her own life, who teaches all the blissful fickle-eyed *gopīs* expertise in arts and who is very famous." The practising devotee should always think: "Is She accepting the service that I offer to Her or not? I'm only doing *bhajana* because it gives me personal

happiness. I'm doing my quota, nothing more. If I don't give myself a certain quota I won't do anything!" But this is not the natural beauty of *bhajan*. Bhajan is beautiful when you feel some want, some void. "I've got my meals, I'm healthy, everything's OK!" If you think like this, your *bhajana* will be lifeless and mechanical. "How many worldly things, like profit, adoration, distinction, money and fame, a person like me misses, but I never miss Rādhārāṇī at all!" But the great devotees' thirst for *bhajan* can never be quenched, just as the thirst for water of someone who suffers from cholera can never be quenched. *parama nāgara Kṛṣṇa, tā'he hao ati tṛṣṇa, bhajo tā're vraja-bhāva loiyā* (Narottama dāsa) "Kṛṣṇa's the greatest amorous hero, be very thirsty for Him and worship Him in the mood of Vraja." Expertise in *bhajan* does not depend on anything else. There won't be even a whiff of empirical knowledge, result-oriented works, profit, adoration or distinction anymore. All these ulterior motives make the mind very coarse -[113] how can one then taste the clear, spotless flavours of Vraja? Ulterior motives deceive us in different ways. Although we know these things in theory, we still don't realize them. Śrīpāda Premānanda Ṭhākura has written in his Manaḥ Śikṣā:

ore mana! e tora bujhibāra bhula!
kohicho vedera pāra, koricho niṣiddhācāra,
bhāva dekhi āpanāra mūla.

"O Mind! You just don't understand! You say that you are beyond the Vedic regulations, but you perform forbidden activities! When I see this I see your very essence."

muktike aiśvarya boli, dūrete diyācho pheli,
iṅgite bujhāo ei tattva.
anitya asāra artha, se bhālo sadāi prārthya,
yā lāgi rajanī divā matta.

"You call liberation a luxurious distraction and have thrown it far away. Give me a hint so that I can understand this truth. Fleeting, useless riches are always desirable and you are going mad thinking about it day and night."

nirhetu yājana koro, hetu se chāḍite nāro,
kathāya virakta e saṁsāra
sarvasva bolicho yāra, dite eka baṭa tāra,
se cāhile koho āpanāra.

"You outwardly perform rituals without desire for gain, but you are not able to free yourself from the same. In your speech you are detached from the material world. Who you call 'my everything' is the same everything you give only a lousy Banyan-leaf to. And you think that it is yours to give!"

koho bhaji vṛndāvana, ghare sukhavāsa mana,
bhālobāso vasaṇa bhūṣaṇe
santuṣṭa mānicho māne, mahākrodhe apamāne,
ātma-sukha ghucilo kemone?

"You say 'I worship Vṛndāvana', but you're happily staying at home - you love all exterior trappings. You're satisfied with praise, but are enraged when insulted. How did you manage to destroy the happiness of your soul?"

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[113] Explanation by Śrī Ānanda Gopāla Gosvāmī.

kohicho gopīra dharma, ki bujhicho tāra marma,
svabhāva chāḍite nāro tile.
dekhiyā pāicho sukha, prakṛti bāghinī mukha,
sarvātmā sahite yei gile.

"You say that you follow the *gopīs* but what do you understand about the meaning of that? You can't let go of your nature one iota. You get pleasure seeing the face of material nature (or women), who swallows you whole."

kohe śuno premānanda, vicārile sab dhandha,
kohile śunile kibā hoy.
hari hari avirata, koho ei prema patha,
nirmala hoibe suniścaya.

"Listen", says Premānanda, "if you think about it, it's all a ball of confusion. What's to be gained by listening or flapping your mouth? Always chant 'Hari, Hari' while you traverse the path of love, and you will surely be cleansed of all impurities!" By taking full shelter of Śrī Hari-nāma *māyā* will go far away. "I'm taking shelter of the holy name - what can *māyā* do to me?" A dauntless devotee should think like that.

Śrīla Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī is in the kingdom of spiritual *līlās* and says: "O golden-limbed girl! I have coloured Your lips now! Do You know what Your lips are like? Like the most excellent hardened nectar!" Svāminī says: "Lips are not liquid, are they? Why are you calling them 'nectarlips' then?" Tulasī says: "I myself don't understand! He who understands it has made me understand! The Cakora-bird (that lives on nectar alone) cannot live without drinking the solid nectar from Your moonlike face! He doesn't drink it - He chews it, and You keep Him alive with this nectar!" While Svāminī hears this all a golden effulgence comes from Her body. That's why Tulasi calls Her Gāṅgeya Gātri in this verse. How blessed is this *dāsī* that She can make Svāminī mad by making Her relish these words! Svāmini says: "But then why did you apply colour to My lips? Aren't they naturally reddish?" Tulasī: "Will some black Kṛṣṇa-parrot come and forcibly bite these lips unless I apply this colour? He'll only come when He gets a hint from You! If He gets no hint, He won't come! You may shake Your head and say ' No No!', making Your nosepearl swing and Your eyebrows dance. How wonderfully beautiful You are at that time! There will be a 'yes' visible in all the 'no's' that You exclaim! It is as if all the 'no's' will be swallowed by a big 'yes'!" Svāminī is overwhelmed by ecstasy when She hears Tulasī's words, and it is as if this *līlā* appears before Her eyes. This *līlā* will actually be visible to the spiritual eyes of those devotees who have developed love for Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa. Svāminī is, after all, the embodiment of *mahā bhāva*! Tulasī concludes by saying: "O Gāṅgeya Gātri! Do You know why I colored Your naturally reddish lips with this Khādira-lipstick? The natural color of the lips will stay on the lips! This is not a solid colour, it is liquid and it will look very beautiful when it is transferred to a black spot ! When I see a red spot on Kṛṣṇa's black cheek I will feel fulfilled!" In this way Tulasī makes Svāminī relish sweet *rasa* through her joking words. The stream of Śrī Raghunātha's transcendental visions flows on.[114]
Śrī Rasika-Candra Dāsa sings:

kanaka varaṇi rādhe, kobe āmi mano sādhe,
sudhādhara adhara tomāra.
karpūrera susaṁyoge, utkṛṣṭa khadira rāge,
rañjita koribo camatkāra

[114] This paragraph is narrated by Śrī Ānanda Gopāla Gosvāmī

"O golden-hued Rādhe! When can I fulfill my desires by coloring Your lips, that are like a stream of nectar, in an astonishing way with the best catechu-lipstick, mixed with camphor?"

atulita suṣamāya, pakka bimbaphala prāya,
hobe tāhā ati suśobhana
nirakhiya śyāma śuka, hoiben samutsuka,
mana sukhe koribe daṁśana

"These lips are already as beautiful as ripe Bimba-fruits, but now they will become even more beautiful. When the Śyāma-parrot sees this He will become very enthusiastic to bite them to His mind's pleasure!"

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VERSE 42:

YAT PRĀNTA-DEŚA LAVA-LEŚA VIGHŪRṆITENA
BADDHAḤ KṢANĀD BHAVATI KṚṢṆA-KARĪNDRA UCCAIḤ
TAT KHAÑJARĪṬA-JAYI NETRA-YUGAṀ KADĀYAM
SAṀPŪJYAYIṢYATI JANAS TAVA KAJJALENA

yat - of whom; *prāntadeśa* - corners; *lava leśa* - slightest; *vighūrṇitena* - by spinning; *baddhaḥ* - bound; *kṣaṇād* - in a moment: *bhavati* - is; *Kṛṣṇa* - Kṛṣṇa; *karīndra* - king of elephants; *uccaiḥ* - greatly; *tat* - that; *khañjarīṭa* - wagtail birds; *jayi* - defeating; *netra* - eyes; *yugaṁ* - couple; *kadā* - when; *ayam* - this; *saṁpūjyayiṣyati* - will worship; *janaḥ* - person; *tava* - Your; *kajjalena* - with eyeliner.

With even the slightest blink from the corners of Your eyes You immediately tie down the king of elephants Kṛṣṇa tightly. When will this person worship those two eyes, that defeat the fickleness of the wagtailbird, with eyeliner?

Explanations: Śrīmat Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī attains a virtual succession of relishable devotional services to Svāminī. The devotees that are fixed in *smaraṇa* will also attain these relishable services within their minds. When *smaraṇa* becomes deep it is called *dhyāna*, or meditation. This *dhyāna* or *nidhidhyāsana* is the best means of meeting the Lord face-to-face. In the Pātañjala-darśana it is written - *tatra pratyayaikatānatā dhyānam*: "To fix one's mind on a single object without interruption is called *dhyāna* or meditation". According to Śrī Jīva Gosvāmī this refers to deep meditation, or *dhruvānusmṛti*. Śrīpāda Śaṅkarācārya describes this kind of deep meditation, which he calls *upāsanā*, as follows in the introduction to his commentary on the Chandogya Upaniṣad: *upāsanaṁ tu yathāśāstra samāpitaṁ kiñcid ālambanam upādāya tasmin samāna cittavṛtti santānakaraṇam tad avilakṣaṇa pratyayāntaritam:* "Upāsanā means to hold on to a certain object of meditation according to scriptural injunctions and fix the mind on it in such a way that other thoughts cannot interrupt." The best way for a

devotee to enhance his meditation is to chant the holy name of the Lord in the company of other devotees. The more the devotee's heart gets purified by this practice of *nāma saṅkīrtana* and the goddess of devotion Bhakti-devi becomes manifest in the heart, the closer the devotee will get to the kingdom of *dhruvānusmṛti*-meditation and will be blessed by attaining spotless bliss.

In this deep meditation Śrī Dāsa Gosvāmī serves Svāminī by ornamenting Her. In this verse he perceives the *kajjala-sevā*, the service of applying eyeliner, praying: "When can I worship these eyes, that tightly bind the Kṛṣṇa-elephant with even the slightest wink, with eyeliner?" Within the prayer lies the acquaintance with the mood. Svāminī is always victorious over Him, hence She is known as Jaya-Śrī. *dyuta narma jalakeli suratādiṣu ca jayenotkarṣeṇa śrīḥ śobhā yasyāḥ* (Sāraṅga Raṅgadā Ṭīkā on Kṛṣṇa Karṇāmṛta, 1): She whose beauty consists of superiority and victory in gambling, joking, watergames, lovegames and others. Rādhārāṇī's superiority is evident, for Her playful glances are Kṛṣṇa's only support. She need not make any great movements with Her eyes, the slightest movement is enough to tightly bind the Kṛṣṇa-elephant! There is an abundance of Her *mādana-rasa* infused in these playful glances, that's why they have so much power over the transcendental youthful Cupid of Vṛndāvana! In *pūrva-rāga*-condition Kṛṣṇa tells Rādhikā's *sakhīs*:

niramala vadana- kamala vara mādhurī,
heraite bhai gelu bhora.
alakhite raṅgiṇī, bhāṅga bhujāṅginī,
maramahi daṁśala mora

(Pada Kalpataru)

"I became absorbed in staring at Her spotless face, which is exquisitely sweet like a lotus flower. In an unseen way this playful girl has bitten My heart, like a female snake!" When an arrow-like glance is fired from Her wonderful bow-like eyebrows Kṛṣṇa, who is full of transcendental bliss, may even faint of ecstasy! Śrīla Prabodhānanda Sarasvati writes in Rādhā Rasa Sudhānidhi (39):

veṇuḥ karān nipatitaḥ skhalitaṁ śikhaṇḍaṁ bhraṣṭaṁca pīta-vasanaṁ vrajarāja sūnoḥ
yasyāḥ kaṭākṣa śara pāta vimūrcchitāsya tāṁ rādhikāṁ paricarāmi kadā rasena

"When can I worship that Rādhikā, whose arrow-like glances cause the prince of Vraja to faint, His yellow *dhotī* to fall off, His crown to loosen and His flute to fall from His hand, with *rasa*?"

"Śyāma is absorbed in relishing the wonderful beauty of Your eyes! How beautiful Your eyes are!"

āṅkhi tārā duṭi, virale bosiyā,
sṛjana koreche vidhi
nīla padma bhāvi, lubadha bhramarā,
chuṭiteche niravadhi

(Pada Kalpataru)

"The Creator sat down in solitude to create the pupils of Her two eyes. Thinking them to be blue lotus flowers, the greedy bumblebees (or Kṛṣṇa) constantly run for them."

The beauty of Śrī Rādhikā's eyes subdue Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the freely enjoying mad young elephant of Vraja, who is otherwise uncontrollable. Kṛṣṇa is named Hari because He steals everyone's hearts and minds with His extraordinary beauty and sweetness, and He is named

Kṛṣṇa because He is all-attractive and all-blissful. He can only be controlled by pure selfless love and there are different amounts of love different devotees have for Him. The amounts are classified in four levels: *aṇu* (atomic), *āpekṣika nyūnādhika-maya* (more or less), *mahān* (great) and *parama mahān* (the greatest love). Ordinary devotees have an atomic amount of *prema*, Nārada Muni and other sages have more or less *prema*, the Vrajavāsīs have great love and only Rādhārāṇi has the greatest love. Kṛṣṇa is controlled by His devotees according to the amount of love they have for Him, and Śrī Rādhikā has the greatest love for Him, therefore She controls Him to the utmost. Madana Mohana, the enchanter of Cupid, is bound tightly by even Svāminī's slightest glance, like the king of elephants.

When Kṛṣṇa returns to His village in the afternoon (this *līlā* is called *uttara goṣṭha*) Svāminī stands on Her moontower to discretely admire His beauty from a distance, burning in the fire of separation from Kṛṣṇa and considering each second that She is separated from Him to last like a millenium. Her girlfriends show Her: *sundari paśya milati vanamālī*! (Gīta Govindam) "O beautiful girl! Look, Vanamālī (Kṛṣṇa who wears a garland of forest flowers) has come!" Our Hero does not look up, so Svāminī, Her heart filled with tremendous anguish of love-in-separation, stares fully at Him, drinking the boundless nectar of His form with the cups of Her eyes. How many hundreds of emotions She reveals! The forest fire of separation that burned in Her heart was extinguished simply by seeing Śyāmasundara. This time Śyāmasundara looks back at Her, and both the Lovers become shy. Śrī Rādhikā pulls Her veil straight and goes away. Then She stops and turns around again, thinking: 'Before I go I have to see Him once more', and casts a slight glance at Him. it is a restless, momentary glance because She is very shy. She slightly smiles in a nervous way because She's so happy to see Him. Her beautiful glance is anointed with bashfulness and humility. Śyāma thirsts for that glance of Svāminī. Svāminī thinks to Herself: 'I could not give anything to You (during Our midday pastimes)', that's why Her sidelong glance is also filled with humility, and She is very glad, because She thinks: 'At least one time I could see Him!' How many things is She telling Him through Her glances! Her glance is the great medicine that saves the life of Śyāma, who also suffers of separation from Her. This is the treasure of His meditation! Śyāma keeps the sweetness of that glance carved on the slab of His heart. Without receiving this formal worship of Her Śyāma could not survive. "How many things She told Me through this momentary glance!", Śyāma meditates. During *pūrva rāga* these glances madden Him and keep Him awake all night. Although Kṛṣṇa controls everything and everyone these momentary glances control even Him! Although innumerable *gopīs* are eager for His sweet glance, Kṛṣṇa eagerly covets Rādhikā's slightest beautiful glance! The slightest gesture of these eyes bewilder Kṛṣṇa, the king of elephants! The sweetness of these eyes makes Him helpless. Tulasī serves Svāminī and makes Her relish the flavours of the remembrance of these pastimes as well, saying: "Hey Svamini! Can this maidservant not worship Your eyes, that control the Kṛṣṇa-elephant with even the slightest movement? Is such a goddess not offered *pūjā*?" The Mahājanas say that this exchange of glances is even more relishable than the intimate sexual pastimes. That's why there is so much worship of Śrī Rādhā's emotional, loving glances!

ei bhāva yukta dekhi' rādhāsya nayana;
saṅgama hoite sukha pāy koṭi guṇa

"When I look at Rādhā's eyes and face in this mood I feel a million times more happiness than when I directly unite with Her." {C.C.}

Tulasī says: "I cannot live without worshipping the goddess of Your eyes! With what shall I formally worship these eyes of Yours? With *kajal*! it's not actually *kajal* (eyeliner), but *garal* (poison), putting Kṛṣṇa's heart on fire! This is not just *pūjā*, this is complete *pūjā*. *saṁpujyayiṣyati*. Not only Your eyes will be worshipped - the *prasādī* flowers will also stick to Kṛṣṇa's lips! When Kṛṣṇa sees this *kajal* He will kiss Your eyes, so that the *kajal* will stick on His lips! In this way Kṛṣṇa gets the leftover flowers of my *pūjā* on His lips and my formal

worship is complete (*saṁpujya*)!" Tulasī puts eyeliner around Kiśorī-maṇi's eyes, that extend upto Her ears. How wonderful is the beauty of these *kajal*-anointed eyes![115] Śrī Vidyāpati Ṭhākura sings:

nayana nalinī dau, añjane rañjala,
bhāṅg vibhaṅgi vilāsa
cakita cakora, jora vidhi bāndhalo,
kevala kājara pāśa

"Two lotus eyes - painted with black *añjana*. They're blinking and playing hide-and-seek! The Creator has tightly bound the startled Kṛṣṇa-Cakora to the ropes of these black *kajjal*-borders!" Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī writes in Kṛṣṇa Bhāvanāmṛta (4.55):

kiraṇa-mālini na prabhuteti tat priyatame naline yad ime tamaḥ
sva mahasā vṛṇuter vā tad apyaho ruciratā ciratāvalataitayoḥ

Seeing Śrī Rādhikā's lotus-like eyes with eyeliner on it seems as if the enemy of the sun, dense darkness had thought: "In this way the power of the sun will fade!", and surrounded the friends of the sun, the lotus flowers (eyes) as the eyeliner. But how amazing! Despite this, the luster of these lotus-ike eyes simply continues forever!" While Tulasī tells Svāminī all this she says to Her anointed eyes: "O eyes! If you ask me: Why are you smearing this black stuff around us, the best of Śrī Rādhikā's senses, while you adorn all Her other limbs with gold and pearls?, then I'll tell you: You don't want anything else but to see Kṛṣṇa, and you are always eager for that, that's why I adorned you with this blackish *kajal*, that has the same colour as Kṛṣṇa (*Kṛṣṇa ruci*)!"[116] Suddenly the vision disappears and Śrī Raghunātha dāsa laments:

he rādhe! ki apūrva nayana kaṭākṣa; sarva citta ākarṣaye pakṣa pratipakṣa
netrāñcale sukaṭāksa vilāsa mādhurye; nimeṣete vighūrṇita Kṛṣṇa gaja-rāje
baddha hoiyā tuyā pāda-padma cāri pāśe; ghuriyā ghuriyā phire sukha saṅga āśe
khañjana nartana jayi cāncala nayane; bhūṣita koribo ki go dalita añjana

(Śrī Haripada Śila)

"O Rādhe! How wonderful are Your glances! They attract everyone's eyes - friends and enemies alike! Even a momentary playful sidelong wink with these sweet eyes is making the king of elephants, Kṛṣṇa, dizzy! He gets bound up and spins all around Your lotus feet, desiring Your blissful company! When can I ornament Your restless eyes, that defeat the fickleness of the wagtail-bird, with this crushed eyeliner?"

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VERSE 43:

YASYĀṄKA RAÑJITA ŚIRAS TAVA MĀNA BHAṄGE
GOṢṬHENDRA SŪNUR ADHIKĀṀ SUṢAMĀM UPAITI
LĀKṢĀ-RASAḤ SA CA KADĀ PADAYOR ADHAS TE

[115] Narrated by Śrī Ānanda Gopāla Gosvāmī.

[116] The words *kṛṣṇa ruci* can also mean: liking for Kṛṣṇa, and in that case Tulasī says: "I adorned you with this eyeliner, that is made of sheer liking for Kṛṣṇa and that will thus incite your attraction to Kṛṣṇa!" Ed.

NYASTO MAYĀ'PY ATITARĀṀ CHABIM ĀPSYATĪHA

yasyā - whose; *aṅka* - mark; *rañjita* - colours; *śiraḥ* - head; *tava* - Your; *māna* - of the pique; *bhaṅge* - breaking; *goṣṭha indra* - the king of Vraja; *sūnuḥ* - the son; *adhikāṁ* - more; *suṣamām* - beauty; *upaiti* - attains; *lākṣā* - footlac; *rasaḥ* - liquid; *sa* - He; *ca* - and; *kadā* - when; *padayoḥ* - both feet; *adhah* - under; *te* - Your; *nyasta* - placed; *mayā* - by me; *api* - even; *atitarāṁ* - great; *chabim* - splendor; *āpsyati* - attains; *iha* - here.

Just to soothe Your proud pique, the prince of Vraja places Your feet on His head, thus making it even more beautiful with the mark of Your footlac! When will I make Your feet most splendid with this nectarean footlac?

Explanations: Śrī Raghunātha's *svarūpāveśa* is very vivid, and in this absorption he prays to Svāminī for Her devotional service. How wonderful is his savour of these visions! How agitated he is when he loses this consciousness again! Those who have attained perfection have nothing else but experience, and those who are advanced in *bhajan* also experience some kind of succession of experiences, otherwise, how could they continue? This succession of transcendental experiences, including even their dreams, are the life-support of the *premika* devotees. Śrī Raghunātha's *svarūpāveśa* is genuine and not at all false. The *sādhakas* should first endeavour for these experiences, and afterwards everything becomes natural, as is the case with the devotees who have attained *rati*. How sweet it is to be with Svāminī in a transcendental absorption! The experienced devotee is always immersed in this *rasa*!

A great agony awakens in Śrī Raghunātha's heart when the vision (of the previous verse) disappears from him, and his heart is floating once again on the waves of anxious prayer that carry him back into the kingdom of *līlā*. This time he (she) will anoint Śrī Rādhikā's footsoles with lac-dye, saying: "Hey Svāmini! Do You know the greatness of the footlac?" How sweet are these words, even if they are just uttered within the mind! When the *smarana* becomes very intense it is as if one speaks them directly to Svāminī. One does not think anymore: "I am doing *smaraṇa*!" This is a *visphūrti* of Śrī Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī. Śrī Dāsa Gosvāmī sees that, as Tulasī Mañjarī, he/she takes a cup of footlac and a brush while sweetly saying: "Vrajendra-nandana's head will become more beautiful when it is anointed with Your footlac as He tries to soothe Your pique by placing Your feet on His head. But that does not make Kṛṣṇa inferior, it will increase His superiority!"[117]

The Gosvāmīs say that Śrī Kṛṣṇa's greatest qualities are that His mind melts with love and that He is controlled by love. This attribute gives life to all other attributes. Śrī Rādhikā is the embodiment of that love, so naturally She controls Kṛṣṇa the most and Kṛṣṇa's quality of *prema vaśyatā*, subjugation by love, is manifested to the utmost when He is with Her. Everyone wants to reveal his own superiority. When the poet Jayadeva was describing in his famous 'Gīta Govindam' how Kṛṣṇa held Rādhā's feet on His head just to soothe Her pique, he could not find the right words to end the Sanskrit verse. While the poet went for his bath, Kṛṣṇa Himself came and wrote the missing syllables down for him in the book: ***dehi pāda pallavam udāram*** : 'Give Me Your generous lotus feet'. We meditate on Kṛṣṇa as He submits Himself to Śrī Rādhikā.

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[117] The explanation of the verse so far is by Śrī Ānanda Gopāla Gosvāmī.

The lac-dye from Śrī Rādhā's lotus feet sticks on Kṛṣṇa's head and the marks form its decoration. The colorful peacockfeather-crown can not make His head as beautiful as this red footlac of Śrī Rādhikā's! The *kiṅkarīs* know the purpose of this very well. Śrīla Līlāśuka says: "You are uniquely known as *śikhi-piñcha maulī*, He who wears a crown of peacockfeathers!" Why does Kṛṣṇa wear the peacockfeather? When He enters Vṛndāvana forest to tend the cows, the peacocks, seeing His fresh monsooncloud-like lustre, dance in ecstasy. Seeing their dancing, Śrī Govinda Naṭarāja, the king of dancers, dances along with them, imitating them by wiggling around on His knees and lifting His hands. When they see this, the peacocks dance in even greater ecstasy, dropping a feather or two. Śrī Kṛṣṇa thinks that the peacocks thus say to Him : "O God of love! If Fate had given us human bodies we could have served You with fruits and flowers from the forest, but alas! We are not so fortunate! We are just birds and everybody loves our feathers! If You would lovingly accept this insignificant offering, then we would be blessed!" So Kṛṣṇa, who is gives Himself away in exchange for an offering of even a spoon of water and a Tulasī-leaf, accepted this simple gift of love on His head. Śrī Rādhikā makes the best offering by printing Her red footlac on His head with great pride. It is the love with which She does it that increases the beauty of His head, not just the colour of the footlac! Transcendence becomes decorated with the colour of pure love in this way.[118] Śrīla Kavi Karṇapura has expertly glorified Rādhikā's footlac as follows:

śrīvatsasya ca kaustubhasya ca ramā devyāś ca garhākaro
rādhā pāda-saroja yāvaka-raso vakṣaḥ sthalaḥ stho hareḥ
bālārka dyuti maṇḍalīva timiraiś chandena vandīkṛta
kālindyāḥ payasīva pība vikacaṁ raktotpalaṁ pātu vaḥ

"One day, when Śrī Rādhikā was in an independent mood, Śrī Hari was anointing Her lotus feet with footlac and He became so attracted to the sweetness of these feet that He held them to His chest, so that the lac, that was not dry yet, got stuck to His chest. May that red lac on Rādhā's lotus-like feet, that sticks on Hari's chest more beautifully than even the Śrīvatsa-mark, the Kaustubha-gem and the goddess of fortune, that is praised with eloquent verses by the glow of the rising morning-sun that destroys the nocturnal darkness and that perks like a blooming red lotus flower in the bluish water of the Yamunā-river, protect you!" {Alaṅkāra Kaustubha, 8.3} In the same way Māninī's footlac increases the beauty of Hari's head. One day Śrīmatī is angry with Kṛṣṇa, so Kṛṣṇa falls at Her feet and says: "If You won't look at Me or speak with Me even once, then how can I live?", pacifying Her proud anger by placing Her feet, that are moist with perspiration, on His head, thus coloring it with Her red footlac and making His peacockfeather fall off. Kṛṣṇa is the emperor of the kingdom of *rasa*, and by holding these feet on His head He becomes *rasika śekhara*, the crown-jewel of relishers!

rasaghana mohana mūrtiṁ vicitra keli mahotsavollāsitam
rādhā caraṇa viloḍita rucira śikhaṇḍaṁ hariṁ vande

(Rādhā Rasa Sudhānidhiḥ - 201)

"I praise Hari, who is gladdened by a wonderful festival of play who is the very form of intense, enchanting *rasa*, and whose beautiful peacockfeather rolls at Śrī Rādhā's feet." Because He forgets everything and becomes absorbed in the *mādhurya rasa* Kṛṣṇa is called *rasa-ghana mohana mūrti*, the embodiment of thickly condensed flavours. Such *rasa* cannot exist if there is still a fibre of awe and reverence for Kṛṣṇa as the majestic Lord. Tulasī holds Svāmini's feet to her chest and paints the red footlac on them while making Her relish the *rasa* of so many *līlās*. She dries the lac off by blowing on it. Who else but an expert *kiṅkarī* can render such a service? How beautiful is that red lac! It looks like the king of sunrise taking

[118] Explanation by Śrī Ānanda Gopāla Gosvāmī.

shelter of Her reddish lotus-footsoles to serve them. The sun is, after all, the friend of the lotus flowers! Anurāgiṇī Tulasī, admiring the beauty and loveliness of these footsoles, tells the red lac: "O red footlac! Don't be distressed, thinking that you are not qualified to colour these coral-red footsoles! It's not through a small amount of good fortune that you can attain the shelter of these feet! As a result of taking shelter of these feet Your fortune will simply increase. You will be able even to beautify the curly locks of Śyāmasundara! Blessed you are for attaining the shelter of Mahābhāvamayī's lotus feet!" How many sweet things Tulasī speaks within her mind! Svāminī's mind is elsewhere. Her mind is immersed in the *rasa* that was served to Her by Tulasī. Then Tulasī attracts Svāminī's mind by saying: "Hey Svāmini! We will feel blessed by seeing You beautify Śyāmasundara's crest! This red lac will increase the beauty of His deep blackish curly locks!" From the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava *ācāryas* we can learn the greatness of surrender to Śrī Rādhā's lotus feet. They love Rādhā more than Kṛṣṇa (*rādhā snehādhikā*). This is the great gift of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī laments for those who do not take shelter of Śrī Rādhā's feet in the age of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, although they may have taken shelter of Śrī Kṛṣṇa's feet:

nṛpo na hari sevitā vyayakṛtī na hary arpakaḥ
kavir na hari varṇakaḥ śrita gurur na hary āśritaḥ
guṇī na hari tat paraḥ sarala-dhīr na kṛṣṇāśrayaḥ
sa na vraja ramānugaḥ sva hṛdi sapta śalyāni me

"A person who may be a king, but who does not serve Lord Hari, a person who may be very generous, but who does not offer anything to Lord Hari, a poet who does not glorify Lord Hari, a person who surrenders to a *guru* without surrendering to Lord Hari, a person who may be very qualified, but who is not dedicated to Lord Hari, a person who may be very sincere, but who does not take shelter of Śrī Kṛṣṇa and he who does not follow in the footsteps of Śrī Rādhā, Vraja's goddess of fortune - these seven persons pierce my heart like javelins!" (Gopāla Campūḥ, Pūrva 33)

Tulasī is absorbed in Svāminī's service, applying Her footlac. This service is so attractive that Śrī Hari sometimes even takes the risk to enter into mother Jaṭilā's house to freely engage in it, dressed like a barber-girl.

dhari napitānī veśa, mahalete paraveśa,
yekhāne bosiyā āche rāi
hāte diyā darapanī, khole nakha rañjanī,
bole boiso dei kāmāi

"Dressed like a barber-girl Kṛṣṇa entered the palace where Rāi (Rādhā) was sitting. Holding a mirror in His hand and naillac on His chest, He told Her: 'Sit down for a pedicure!'

bosilā ye rasavatī nārī
khulilo kanaka bāṭī, āniyā vimala ghaṭī,
ḍhālilo suvāsita vāri
kare nakha rañjanī, cāncaye nakhera kaṇī,
śobhita korolo yeno cāṅde
nāpitānī eke śyāmā, nanīra putalī jhāmā,
bulāiche monera ānande

"That humorous, amorous girl sat down, opened her golden box and filled a clean jug with scented water. Then she began to make Rāi's nails as beautiful as the moon with Her naillac. This barber-girl is named Śyāmā and blissfully wanders around like a puppet of butter."

ghasi ghasi rāṅgā pāy, ālatā lāgāya tāy

nirakhi nirakhi avirāma
racaye vicitra kori, caraṇa hṛdaye dhari'
tale lekhe āpanāra nāma

"She rubbed and rubbed Rāi's feet with footlac and constantly looked whether it was done nicely or not. Holding Rāi's feet to her chest, she wrote her name on Her footsoles in a wonderful way."

nāpitāni bole dhanī, dekhaho caraṇa khāni,
bhālo manda koroho vicāra
dekhi suvadanī kohe, ki nāma likhilā ohe,
paricoy deho āpanāra

"The barber-girl said: 'O fortunate Girl! Look at Your feet and consider if my work is good or bad!' Looking carefully, fair-faced Rāi said: 'Ohe! Which name have you written there? Introduce yourself to Me!"

nāpitānī kohe dhani, śyāma nāma dhari āmi,
vasati e tomāra nagare
dvija caṇḍī dāse koy, ei nāpitānī noy,
kāmāila yāho nija ghare

"The barber-girl said: "O fortunate girl! I am named Śyāma and I live in Your town!" Dvija Caṇḍī Dāsa says: "This is not a barber girl! Go home after You have finished Your pedicure-job (or:after You collected Your earnings, having enjoyed Your Beloved)".

The service of *premamayī's* (Rādhā, who is full of love for Kṛṣṇa) feet is the greatest wealth of *rasika rāja* (Kṛṣṇa, the king of relishers). *bujhibe rasika bhakta, na bujhibe mūḍha* (Caitanya Caritāmṛta): "The *rasika* devotees will understand it, but the ignorant will not." While Raghunātha dāsa applies the footlac the vision disappears and he laments and prays for that devotional service.
Śrīla Rasika-Candra Dāsa sings:

bhaṅgite durjaya māna, caraṇe luṭāya kāna,
lākṣā rase śire rañje tāra.
tāhāte se śiro śobhā, adhika bāḍāye kibā,
anupama saundarya vistāra

"Kṛṣṇa rolls at Your feet to soothe Your turbulent jealous anger and dyes His head with Your footlac. That makes His head even more beautiful, beyond comparison!"

kobe sei lākṣā rase, tava pada adho deśe,
rañjita koribo nija kare.
sarva kānti garva ṭuṭi, uṭhibe mādhuri phuṭi,
nirakhibo du'nayana bhare

"When will I apply that lac to Your footsoles with my own hands and fill my eyes with its beauty, that breaks the pride of all other luster with the rising of its blossoming sweetness?"

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VERSE 44:

KALĀVATI NATĀṀSAYOḤ PRACURA KĀMA PUÑJOJJVALAT
KALĀNIDHI MURA-DVIṢAḤ PRAKAṬA RĀSA SAMBHĀVAYOḤ
BHRAMAD BHRAMARA JHAṄKṚTAIR MADHURA MALLI MĀLĀṀ MUDĀ
KADĀ TAVA TAYOḤ SAMARPAYATI DEVI DĀSĪ-JANAḤ

kalāvati - artistic girl; *nata* - lowered; *aṁsayoḥ* - shoulders; *pracura* - abundant; *kāma* - lust; *puñja* - abundant; *ujjvalat* - blazing; *kalānidhi* - ocean of arts, or a full moon of lust; *mura-dviṣaḥ* - Kṛṣṇa, the enemy of Mura; *prakaṭa* - manifest; *rāsa* - Rāsa dance; *sambhāvayoḥ* - meeting; *bhramad* - wandering; *bhramara* - bees; *jhaṅkṛtaiḥ* - by humming; *madhura* - sweet; *malli* - jasmine flowers; *mālāṁ* - garland; *mudā* - joyfully; *kadā* - when; *tava* - Your; *tayoḥ* - of them; *samarpayati* - offers; *devi* - goddess; *dāsī janaḥ* - maidservant.

O Devi, when He touches Your lowered shoulders in the Rāsa-dance, Kṛṣṇa, the enemy of Mura, looks like a full moon (Kalānidhi) shining with an abundance of lust. O Kalāvati (artistic girl)! When will this maidservant joyfully place a garland of sweet jasmine flowers, surrounded by wandering humming bees, on those shoulders?

Explanations: When the vision (of the previous verse) disappears Śrī Raghunātha dāsa prays for direct service. After applying Śrī Rādhikā's footlac he now proceeds with hanging a jasmine-garland surrounded by sweetly humming bees around Her neck. How many beautiful pastimes Tulasī remembers when she hangs this sweet jasmine-garland on Her shoulders! When she calls Her Kalāvati she perceives the Rāsa-*līlā.* How sweet are Śrīmatī's shoulders when She dances the Rāsa and She is embraced by Rāsa Vilāsī's (Kṛṣṇa, the enjoyer of the Rāsa-dance) strong arms! How many arts Śyāmasundara shows! That's why He is called Kalā-nidhi, the ocean of arts and Rādhikā is called Kalāvatī, the artistic girl.

rasavatī raṅge rasika-vara rāya
aparūpa rāsa- vilāsa kalārase, koto manamatha mūrachāya
kusumita keli, kadamba kadambaka, surabhita śītala chāy

"Rasavatī (tasty Rādhikā) sports with the greatest Rasika (Kṛṣṇa) in the wonderful, artistic Rāsa-*līlā*. How many Cupids faint (when they see Their beauty)! The Kadamba-trees provide a cool shade and their flowers give a nice scent."

bāṅdhulī bandhu, madhura adhare dhari,
mohana muralī bājāy
kāminī koṭi, nayana nīla utapala,
paripūjite mukha-canda

"Kṛṣṇa plays His enchanting Muralī-flute, holding it to His sweet lips, that are the friends of the beautiful Bāndhuka-flower, while millions of *gopīs* worship His moonlike face with the blue lotus flowers of their eyes."

Although there are millions of *gopīs* in the Rāsa-dance, Kalāvatī Rādhā gets special attention. A sweet remembrance of this Rāsa-festival awakens in Tulasī's heart, and she infuses that relish in Svāminī's heart. One person's feelings are thus transferred to another person's heart, just as a person can have devotion infused within his heart by associating with a great devotee. The devotee should serve Svāminī and make Her float on the waves of the proper moods at the same time. How can we serve like this unless our hearts are qualified for these feelings? We must transfer this joy to the heart of *mahā bhāva* personified, Śrī Rādhikā![119] We serve *śṛṅgāra* (Kṛṣṇa, the personification of the transcendental erotic flavours) through *mahā bhāva* (Śrī Rādhā, the personification of the greatest ecstatic love) and we serve *mahā bhāva* through *śṛṅgāra*. Śrīla Narottama Ṭhākura Mahāśaya sings:

rādhā-Kṛṣṇa duhu prema, lakṣa bāṇa yeno hema,
yāhāra hilola rasa sindhu
cakora nayana prema, kāma rati kore dhyāna,
pirīti sukhera duhu bandhu

"The love of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa is purer than gold molten a hundred-thousand times, and this love makes high waves in the ocean of *rasa*. Let us relish this *prema* with our Cakora-bird-like eyes and meditate on this transcendental Kāma (Cupid Kṛṣṇa) and Rati (Rādhikā), for They are the friends of ecstatic love."

rādhikā preyasī-varā, vāma dike manoharā,
kanaka keśara kānti dhare
anurāge rakta śāḍī, nīla paṭṭa manohārī,
maṇimaya ābharaṇa pore

"Śrī Rādhikā is Kṛṣṇa's dearmost beloved, She is basically in opposition to Him and She is very enchanting, having the lustre of a golden Keśara-flower. Her red *sārī* shows Her passionate love for Kṛṣṇa and Her silken blue outer-garments are very enchanting, decorated with jewelled ornaments."

koroye locana pāna, rūpa līlā duhu gāna,
ānande magana sahacarī
veda vidhi agocara, ratana vedīra para,
sevo niti kiśora kiśorī

"Drink Their nectarean forms and pastimes with Your eyes and sing Their glories, being Their female assistant absorbed in bliss! Nicely serve Kiśora-Kiśorī, who are unknown to the Vedic rules and who sit on a jewelled platform!"

When we serve the *mahā-vāṇī* (great words) of the *ācāryas* our hearts will become qualified. The *vāṇī* itself will bring the qualification! *kevala bhakata saṅga, prema bhakti rasa raṅga, līlā kathā vraja rasapure* (Prema Bhakti Candrikā) "Only in the company of devotees one can blissfully discuss Kṛṣṇa's *rasika* pastimes in Vraja in a loving, devotional way." This process of hearing, chanting and remembering the *rasika* pastimes of Vraja is again illuminated by the best of devotional practice, Nāma Saṅkīrtana! Śrī Sanātana Gosvāmī teaches in Bṛhad Bhāgavatāmṛta (2.5.218):

taddhi tat tad vrajakrīḍā dhyāna gāna pradhānayā
bhaktyā sampadyate preṣṭha nāma saṅkīrtanojjvalam

[119] This point is made by Śrī Ānanda Gopāla Gosvāmī.

From devotional service, that consists of meditating on the Vraja-pastimes, and singing about them, and which is illuminated by *nāma-saṅkīrtana* of the beloved, Vraja-*prema* will arise." On this Śrī Sanātana himself comments: *gānetyuktvā nāma saṅkīrtane prāpte'pi nija priyatama nāma saṅkīrtanasya premāntaraṅgatara sādhanatvena punar viśeṣena nirdeśaḥ. kiṁ vā tat sampatti lakṣaṇa jñānāya*. "Although *gāna*, or singing, is the same as *nāma saṅkīrtana* of the beloved, it is still mentioned separately because it is the most intimate item of loving devotional practice. Or the *nāma saṅkīrtana* of the beloved is separately mentioned because that is the definition of the treasure of *prema*."

The word *natāṁsayoḥ* brings Svāminī's beautiful shoulders on the path of our memories. How sweet are Śrī Rādhikā's shoulders during the Rāsa-*līlā*! Her shoulders are lowered because Rāsa Vilāsī Śyāmasundara keeps His big rod-like arm on them. How many arts of Śyāmasundara are revealed! Kalāvati Śrī Rādhā, Kalānidhi Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Artistic Rādhā and Śyāma! How beautiful is Their expert meeting! Without accepting the mood of a maidservant this beauty is hard to imagine.[127] In his narration of the Rāsa-*līlā* Śrī Śuka Muni has certainly mainly described *nāyikā-bhāva* (the relationships of independent heroines with Śrī Kṛṣṇa), but it is not that he did not mention *sakhī-bhāva* (the mood of the *gopīs* who prefer to arrange for Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa's meetings over their own meetings with Kṛṣṇa) at all! *mañjarīs* are a kind of *sakhīs*. They are dedicated to devotional service alone. It cannot be conclusively ascertained from the verses of Śrīmad Bhāgavata Purāṇa whether there were *mañjarīs* present during the Rāsa-dance or not, but Śrīla Kavi Karṇapura writes in 'Ānanda Vṛndāvana Campūḥ', his elaboration on the Tenth Canto of Śrīmad Bhāgavata, about *anucarīs*, or maidservants, in the Rāsa-dance. And Śrīmat Rūpa Gosvāmī has written a verse in his 'Utkalikā Vallari'-*stava* (42) about *mañjarīs* in the Rāsa-*līlā* and about their superiority over the *sakhīs:*

rāsārambha vilasati parityajya goṣṭhāmbujākṣī vṛndaṁ vṛndāvana bhuvi rahaḥ keśaveṇopanīya
tvāṁ svādhīna priyatama padaprāpaṇenārcitāṅgīṁ dūre dṛṣṭvā hṛdi kimacirād arpayiṣyāmi darpam

"When will my heart be filled with pride as I see from afar how Keśava leaves all the lotus-eyed girls of Vraja at the beginning of the Rāsa-dance in Vṛndāvana and takes You to a lonely place where He, under Your command, decorates You with flowers?" This verse particularly shows the presence of *mañjarīs* in the Rāsa-dance (and their usual uniquely fortunate position). Wherever Śrīmatī is, there are Her maidservants, following Her like Her shadow. Śrīmatī cannot keep anything secret from them, for they are nondifferent from Her life and Her body.

Śrīla Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī says: *pracura kāma puñjojjvalat kalānidhi*: Each limb of Kṛṣṇa, the ocean of arts, is blazing with desire to unite with each limb of the artistic girl Śrī Rādhikā. He is, after all, the embodiment of the transcendental erotic flavour. This desire is not a mundane, selfish desire. Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī writes about the opening verse of the Rāsa-*līlā* chapters of Śrīmad Bhāgavata (*vīkṣya rantuṁ manaś cakre* Ś.B. 10.29.1): *sarvātiśaya premavatīnāṁ śrī vraja-sundarīnāṁ manoratha paripūraṇam eva priya mātra sukhārthaṁ sarvaṁ kurvatah śrī bhagavato mukhyatara prayojanam iti darśayaṁs tad eva tasya sarvātiśāyi mukhya sukham iti prakaṭayan...tābhiḥ saha rāsakrīḍāṁ pañcendriya tulya priyai pañcabhir adhyāyair varṇayati* (Vaiṣṇava Toṣaṇī Ṭīkā). Although the Lord is *ātmarāma*, or self-satisfied, and *āpta-kāma*, completely fulfilled, devotional love can still awaken desires within His heart. The Lord can do anything to increase the ecstasy of His loving devotees and to accept the service rendered by them. His main purpose is to fulfill the desires of the beautiful girls of Vraja, and the *gopīs*' only purpose is to make their beloved happy. To reveal this supreme truth Śrīmad Bhāgavata relates the Rāsa-*līlā* of the Lord and the Vraja-sundarīs in five chapters that are like the five life-airs of Śrīmad Bhāgavata." Of all these loving girls Śrīmatī Rādhikā is supreme and

[127] Purport by Śrī Ānanda Gopāla Gosvāmī.

unrivalled. She is the crown-jewel of *gopīs* and no-one can make Kṛṣṇa enjoy so much as Her. Ujjvala (shining) Kṛṣṇa's abundant lust makes Him yearn for playful pastimes with Śrī Rādhā. There are other consorts also, but Kṛṣṇa's mind is fixed on Śrī Rādhikā, and although millions of *gopīs* dance wonderfully during the Rāsa-dance Kṛṣṇa's gaze is fixed on Śrī Rādhā. How wonderfully sweet are these pastimes! *śliṣyati kām api cumbati kām api kām api ramayati rāmām* (Gīta Govindam): "He embraces one *gopī*, He kisses one *gopī* and He makes love with another *gopī*." He can please everyone, but only Śrī Rādhikā can please Him. That is Her speciality!

She is Kalāvatī (an artistic girl) indeed! Her lowered shoulders show that She has met Śyāmasundara. His left arm rests on Her shoulder and this makes Her very blissful. Tulasī's expert narration crystallizes the flavours of the Rāsa-dance before Mahābhāvamayī. Tulasī immerses Kiśorī-maṇi's mind in the *līlā-rasa*, prattling: "Now His arm rests on Your shoulders! If I hang this Jasmine-garland on them now it may ultimately break! Anyway, let it break! (its only purpose is anyway to make Śyāma attracted to You and to make Him touch You)" Blessed is this maidservant! Who can make Svāminī happy like her? She won't just hear any old topic! If it suits Her mood She will hear it, otherwise not. Mahāprabhu also did not hear from everybody:

gīta śloka grantha kibā yei kori āne; prathame śunāya sei svarūpera sthāne
svarūpa ṭhāi uttare yadi, loiyā tāra mana; tabe mahāprabhu sthāne korāya śravaṇa
rasābhāsa hoy yadi siddhānta virodha; sahite nā pāre prabhu, mone hoy krodha

(Caitanya Caritāmṛta Antya 5)

"Whoever brought a song or a Sanskrit verse to Mahāprabhu first had to recite it to Svarūpa Dāmodara, and if Svarūpa approved of it he would let Mahāprabhu hear it. If the song or text was not in good taste or was philosophically controversial the Lord could not tolerate it and would be angry within His mind." These confidential topics must be discussed in a group that is favorably disposed. While doing *bhajan* the mind must meet the minds of the *ācāryas*. Devotional service cannot be rendered while the mind remains in material consciousness. We must be able to exchange thoughts with Each other. How pure the mind must be for that! "Won't I become the way She, to whom I have given my life, wants me to be? O Svāmini! Then You will not have any secrets for me anymore!" For attaining Rādhārāṇī's service the devotee must give his whole mind to Her, giving up everything else!

Śrī Raghunātha's mind is in the kingdom of transcendental pastimes. Standing before Svāminī he/she says: "Look! I will adorn Your lowered shoulders with this jasmine-garland!" Rādhā and Śyāma keep Their arms on Each other's shoulders, that's why Their shoulders are low. How sweetly and expertly They shuffle with Their feet! When Śyāma places His left arm, that is so long that it reaches down to His knees, on Śrīmatī's left shoulder during the Rāsa-dance, He extends it so far that He can touch Her left breast, but Svāminī slaps Him on the hand to stop Him from such naughty acts. They lick (relish) Each other's sight from the corners of Their eyes and Their arms are studded with goosepimples. Gaurī (golden) Svāminī and blackish Śyāma have low shoulders because of Their meetings. Tulasī says: "Śyāma is set alight by the fire of abundant lust, and You extinguished that fire."[120] Śrī Rāmānanda Rāya told Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu: *śata koṭi gopīte nahe kāma nirvāpana; ihātei anumāna śrī rādhāra guṇa* (C.C. Madhya 8,116) "Not even a billion *gopīs* can extinguish the blazing fire of Kṛṣṇa's lusty desires. (But Rādhikā can, so) from this we can understand Śrī Rādhā's glories!"

Blessed is this maidservant! How much *rasa* she makes Svāminī relish while serving Her! This can not be experienced without allegiance to Śrīla Rūpa and Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa

[120] Purport by Śrī Ānanda Gopāla Gosvāmī.

Gosvāmī. Śrīla Narottama dāsa Thākura sings: *jaya sanātana rūpa prema-bhakti rasakūpa* "All glories to Sanātana and Rūpa Gosvāmī, the wells of nectar of loving devotion!" The mind should be immersed in that well!

While TulasI hangs the garland around Svāminī's neck she reminds Her of Her past sports with Śyāma: "If Śyāma was now embracing You, there would be no need and no chance anymore for me to put this garland on!" After adorning Śrīmatī with the flowergarland Tulasī places a big jewelled mirror before Her and says: "Hey Śyāmājū! Just see now how I decorated You!" Svāminī is enchanted when She sees Her sweet reflection in the mirror, and proudly says: "Tulasi! You really know how to make Kṛṣṇa enjoy! Even when He sees Me without make-up He becomes enchanted, so I cannot imagine how He will feel when He sees this extraordinary beauty! Everything will be wasted when My hero cannot enjoy all this!" In this way Svāminī speaks out Her heart to Tulasī in so many ways.[121] Suddenly the vision ends and Śrī Raghunātha dāsa laments and prays as follows:

o go devi kalāvati rāseśvarī rādhe; mahā rāsa rasa-līlā tomāra prasāde
dhariyā tomāra kaṇṭha madana mohana; śrī rāsa maṇḍala mājhe koribe nartana
he rādhe! kandarpa vilāse rāse tava nātha; mahojjvala kalānidhi nāmete vikhyāta
emata mahimā-maya tomāra kaṇṭha-deśa; ke vā jāne kivā guṇa mādhurya viśeṣa
se heno galete dibo madhu malli mālā; jhaṅkāriche ali yathā koriyā ujālā
koto mate sevā kori rahibo caraṇe; śrīpāda śrī dāsa gosvāmī kore nivedana

"O artistic Queen of the Rāsa-dance, Śrī Rādhe! By Your mercy Madana Mohana can hold You around the neck during the luscious Mahā-Rāsa-līlā, as You both dance in the middle of the Rāsa-circle! O Rādhe! During this erotic Rāsa-pastime Your Lord became known as the brightly shining full moon of lust. Who knows the glory of Your neck and of Your special sweet attributes?! I will hang a sweet jasmine-garland, that is surrounded by a swarm of buzzing bumblebees, around that neck and thus make it even more splendid. Śrī Dāsa Gosvāmī prays: I will stay at Your feet and render so many kinds of service!"

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VERSE 45:

SŪRYĀYA SŪRYAMAṆI NIRMITA VEDI MADHYE
MUGDHĀṄGI BHĀVATA IHĀLI-KULAIR VṚTĀYĀḤ
ARGHYAṀ SAMARPAYITUM UTKA DHIYAS TAVĀRĀT
SAJJĀNI KIṀ SUMUKHI DĀSYATI DĀSIKEYAM

sūryāya - unto the sungod; *sūryamaṇi* - sunstones; *nirmita* - made of; *vedi* - altar; *madhye* - on; *mugdhāṅgi* - beautiful-limbed girl; *bhāvata* - with love; *iha* - here; *ali* - girlfriends; *kulaiḥ* - by a group; *vṛtāyāḥ* - surrounded; *arghyaṁ* - oblation; *samarpayitum* - to offer; *utka* - eager; *dhiyaḥ* - heart; *tava* - Your; *ārāt* - near; *sajjāni* - the articles of worship; *kiṁ* - what; *sumukhi* - fair-faced girl; *dāsyati* - will give; *dāsikā* - maidservant; *iyam* - this.

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[121] Purport by Śrī Ānanda Gopāla Gosvāmī.

O Mugdhāṅgi (beautiful-limbed girl) Sumukhi (fair-faced girl)! When will this maidservant sit close by You and lovingly hand You the paraphernalia when You offer formal oblations to the Sungod, sitting on an altar made of sunstones, surrounded by Your friends?

Explanations: In his transcendental visions Śrī Raghunātha dāsa relishes the flavours of ornamenting Svāminī and when this vision disappears he prays for devotional service. For the benefit of the neophytes in *rāgānugā-bhakti* he has revealed the expertise of these ornamenting-services through his prayers. The neophyte should not serve as he likes it; he should serve according to Śrī Rādhārāṇī's wish, following in the footsteps of those who understand what is on Her mind. Śrīla Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura has described it like this in his Prema Bhakti Candrikā: *mahājanera yei patha, tā'te hobo anurata, pūrvāpara koriyā vicāra* "Be dedicated to the path outlined by the *mahā-janas* (the Gosvāmīs), and consider their teachings in past and present". The Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas that take shelter of the Yugala-*bhajana* (worship of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa) follow in the footsteps of Śrī Rūpa and Śrī Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī. They are Vraja's *mañjarīs*, that have descended to earth with Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu to teach expertise in serving the Divine Couple. They are very eager to teach the world how the maidservants, that are called *sākṣāt sevādhikāriṇī* (girls that are qualified for direct devotional service), must serve the Divine Pair. The compilations 'Stavamālā' of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī and 'Stavāvalī' of Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī are filled with their experiences and their expertise in *bhajana*, and are thus most relishable. From this confidential treasure of *bhajana* can be learned how to be eager for devotional service. How intense was the love-in-separation of Rūpa and Raghunātha! This distress is not a wordly kind of distress, it is distress soaked in transcendental bliss! Is it so easy to feel the want of Śrī Rādhikā? It cannot be felt without being absorbed in the identification of a maidservant! The *ācāryas* have taught - do *bhajana* by awakening your want! When feelings of separation have awoken everything can be given up, nothing can or should be given up by force.[122] Śrī Narottama prays: *kobe Kṛṣṇa-dhana pābo, hiyāra mājhāre thobo, juḍāibe e pāpa parāṇa* (Prārthanā): "When will I get the Kṛṣṇa-treasure and keep it in my heart, thus soothing my sinful life-airs? There's no other way to soothe the life-airs! Taste for wordly things will automatically be lost. Can a flowergarland around the neck and sandalwoodpulp on the forehead satisfy you when you are hungry? Can you peacefully eat and sleep when your heart is pierced by a lance? In the same way the Gosvāmīs naturally lost their appetite for material pleasure out of separation from Kṛṣṇa. This stage should be reached through the sane process of balanced detachment and sincere selfless devotion. One must practise great patience in that process and not try to jump artificially to such soaring heights. *pābo rādhā-Kṛṣṇa pā, ghucibe monera ghā, dūre yābe e sab vikala* "When I attain Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa's lotus feet all contamination will go from my mind and all anxiety will go far away." Until now I could not recognize myself as Śrī Rādhikā's maidservant! This is the worship of love, and all love accepts defeat by the love of Rādhārāṇī's maidservants! How wonderful the mood of the *mañjarīs* who worship Śrī Rādhikā (*śrī rādhikārādhikā*) is! Śrīpāda Prabodhānanda Sarasvatī glorifies them as follows:

rādhā-Kṛṣṇa padāravinda makarandāsvāda madyan mano-
bhṛṅgāḥ santatam udgatāśru pulakas tat prema tīvraughataḥ
aty ānanda bharāt kadāpy ati laye śocyantya ātmeśayoḥ
sevāyāḥ vihateḥ sphurantu mama tā śrī rādhikārādhikā

[122] This explanation was made by Śrī Ānanda Gopāla Gosvāmī.

(Vṛndāvana Mahimāmṛta 6.81)

"May the worshipers (maidservants) of Śrī Rādhikā, whose minds are like bumblebees that are intoxicated by constantly drinking the honey from Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa's lotus feet, who always cry great streams of tears, whose bodies are studded with goosepimples out of great ecstatic love for Them, and who greatly lament when they are unable to serve their master and mistress for even a moment, because they have momentarily fainted of great ecstasy, or because the Divine Pair have hidden Themselves from them in great ecstasy, be revealed to me!"

After Svāminī has been fully dressed and ornamented She goes to Kṛṣṇa's abode Nandīśvara to cook for Kṛṣṇa, but first She will offer oblations to the Sungod, Her father's worshipable deity, on a platform made of sun-stones. She does not desire any material benefit from the Sungod, but She simply prays for Śyāmasundara's welfare and for a meeting with Him without obstacles. Later in the afternoon, at about 3.p.m., She offers a full formal worship (*pūjā*) to the Sungod. Since the next verse, 46, deals with the afternoon-pastimes, this verse can apply to the afternoon-*pūjā* also. That is described in Govinda Līlāmṛta (Chapter 18): Śrī Rādhikā comes to the town of Sūryakuṇḍa (about 12 km north of Rādhākuṇḍa) with Her girlfriends, while Kṛṣṇa has come dressed like a priest (*brāhmaṇa*), named Viśva Śarmā Brahmacārī to perform the ceremony. His body, draped in saffron robes, shines with the resultant effulgence of celibacy! Mother Jaṭilā is there, so Kṛṣṇa says: "I'm a *brahmacārī* (celibate student)! I don't touch women! Touch this Kuśa-grass while accepting Me as Your priest!" How wonderful is that *mantra* of acceptance!

jagan maṅgala kṛt gotraṁ śucivit pravaraṁ śucim
bhavantaṁ viśva śarmānāṁ purohitatayā vṛṇe

"I accept Viśva-śarmā, whose dynasty (*gotra*) performs welfare work (*maṅgala kṛt*) for the world (*jagat*) and who is most pure (*śucivit pravaraṁ śuciḥ*), as my priest!" (Govinda Līlāmṛta 18,68) The naughty pun of this verse is: "I accept Kṛṣṇa, who bestows welfare (*maṅgala*) on the world (*jagat*) by the recitation of His holy name (*gotra*), who is the best (*pravara*) of knowers of erotic flavours (*śuci rasa*), as My priest!" Svāminī understands all these secret jokes made by Kṛṣṇa in front of Her mother-in-law. How beautiful is Her face! Therefore She is named Sumukhi in this verse. After She accepts Viśvaśarmā as Her ritual priest She must recite another *mantra :*

śrī bhāsvate'tanu tamaḥ saṁhantrety anurāgine
puraḥ sate'smai mitrāya padminī-bandhave namaḥ

"I offer My obeisances to the effulgent (*bhasvān*) Sungod (*padminī bandhu* is the sun, the friend of the lotus flowers) Mitra, who destroys the darkness (*atanu-tama*) and who has a red splendour (*anurāgī*) at dawn and dusk." (Govinda Līlāmṛta 18,69) Second meaning: "I have been given to Mitra (My beloved Kṛṣṇa), who is endowed with the splendour of Śrī (the goddess of fortune as a golden stripe on His chest), who destroys the affliction caused by Cupid (*atanu*) ,who is very passionate (*anurāgī*), and who is the friend of the Padminīs (*padminī bandhu*), the lotuslike *gopīs*!" While Śrī Rādhikā recites these *mantras* the *brahmacārī* Kṛṣṇa offers flowers, *padya* (footwater) and *arghya* (handwater) to the deity of the Sungod. Svāminī is very eager to offer the oblations, being faced by Jaṭilā! How sweetly She stands there, surrounded by Her dearest girlfriends! That's why She is named Mugdhāṅgī, the Girl with the enchanting limbs. The *rasika mañjarīs* have prepared an altar made of sunstones with the different paraphernalia for this formal worship. Mugdhāṅgī offers oblations to awaken desires.

Everyone's minds and hearts float away in innumerable directions on the stream of the relish of wonderfully variegated transcendental flavours. Old Jaṭilā, satisfied with the procedure of the ritual, offers eatables and Rādhikā's jewelled ring to the *brahmacārī* as a reward. How much fun all the *gopīs* have inwardly! Our *brahmacārī*, who claims to be a disciple of Garga Muni, accepts nor the food, nor the ring. He is learned in astrology and marine scriptures, and He tells old Jatilā: 'I am purchased only by the love of the people of Vraja!" Knowing that Viśva Śarmā is also a great astrologer, Jaṭilā says: "I would be blessed if You could read the hand of my daughter-in-law so that you could tell me about Her future success and failure!" Seeing Rādhā's handpalm Viśva Śarmā becomes overwhelmed by ecstasy and, concealing His astonishment, says: "How amazing! When I see all these sacred signs in Her hand I am convinced that this girl is the goddess of fortune Herself! Wherever She stays all opulence and auspiciousness can be found!" Each limb of Rādhārāṇī is filled with waves of *mahā bhāva*. How much Her heart is throbbing! Svāminī thinks: "This boy must be Śyāmasundara, otherwise why would I feel so ecstatic? My desires would be fulfilled if I could unite with this *brahmacārī*!" Tulasī, being in a sense non-different from Svāminī, feels these desires also awakening in her heart and thinks: "It would be great if I could unite my Svāminī with this *brahmacārī*, but Her mother-in-law is around, so there's just no way! O Rādhe! I'm so unqualified, alas! I could not serve You according to Your heart's wishes!" Thus lamentations well up and the vision disappears. In external consciousness Śrī Raghunātha then prays to Svāminī's lotus feet for this devotional service:

he mugdhāṅgi! śrī rādhike vṛṣabhānu sutā; priya sakhīgaṇa yūthe hoiyā veṣṭitā
sūrya-maṇi vinirmitā ujjvala vedīte; bhakti bhāve sūrya deve pādya arghya dite
vyākulita hoile tumi pūjā upahāra; arpaṇa koribo āmi nikaṭe tomāra
ei vāñchā pūrṇa koro āmāra īśvarī; anukūla sevā mātra cāhe e kiṅkarī

"O Śrī Rādhike with the enchanting limbs! O Princess of Vṛṣabhānu! Surrounded by Your dearmost girlfriends You sit on a brilliant altar made of sun-stones and offer oblations to the Sun-God with great devotion! You are very eager to offer different items, so I'm staying right next to You to help You. O Īśvari! Please fulfill this desire of mine! This maidservant just wants to serve You favorably!" (Śrī Haripada Śila)

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VERSE 46:

VRAJAPURA PATI RĀJÑYĀ ĀJÑAYĀ MIṢṬAM ANNAṀ
BAHU VIDHAM ATI YATNĀT SVENA PAKKAṀ VARORU
SAPADI NIJA SAKHĪNĀṀ MAD VIDHĀNĀṀ CA HASTAIR
MADHUMATHANA NIMITTAṀ KIṀ TVAYĀ SANNIDHĀPYAM

vrajapura - of Vraja; *pati rājñyā* - by the Queen; *ājñayā* - on the order; *miṣṭam* - sweet; *annaṁ* - rice; *bahu* - many; *vidham* - kinds; *ati* - very; *yatnāt* - carefully; *svena* - personally; *pakkaṁ* - cooked; *varoru* - nicely thighed girl; *sapadi* - simultaneously; *nija* - own; *sakhīnāṁ* - of the girlfriends; *mad* - my; *vidhānāṁ* - like; *ca* - and; *hastaiḥ* - by the hands; *madhumathana* - Kṛṣṇa; *nimittaṁ* - for the sake; *kiṁ* - what; *tvayā* - by You; *sannidhāpyam* - placed.

O Varoru (nicely thighed girl)! After You very carefully cook many kinds of sweets for Madhumathana (Kṛṣṇa) on the order of the Queen of Vraja, Yaśodā, You hand them to Your girlfriends like me (to bring them to Kṛṣṇa).

Explanations: In his *svarūpāveśa* Śrī Raghunātha dāsa serves Svāminī. He has a very vivid experience of these *rasika* services. In the previous verse he perceived the *sūrya-pūjā*, and in this verse he sees how he/she is ordered by Svāminī to bring *laḍḍus* and other savouries to Kṛṣṇa's abode Nandīśvara in the afternoon, after Svāminī had been ordered to diligently prepare these dishes by Mother Yaśodā. After Śrīmatī performed the worship of the Sungod (at 3.30 p.m), She is forced to separate from Kṛṣṇa (after playing with Him for more than four hours at midday) because Her mother-in-law takes Her back home. In Govinda Līlāmṛta (18.94) this event is beautifully depicted:

hṛdaya-dayita līlā snigdha dugdhaiḥ prapūrṇā tanu kanaka ghaṭī yā subhruvo'syaḥ sakhīnām
nayana mudam atānīt sāśu vairasyam āptā viraha viṣa vivarṇā netra santāptaye'bhūt

"The pitcher of fair-browed Rādhikā's golden body was filled with the pleasing milk of Her heart's lover's playful sports. This gave great joy to the eyes of Her girlfriends, but now this jug lost its colour since the poison of Her separation from Kṛṣṇa turned the milk sour and their eyes began to burn of it." When Śrī Rādhikā comes home Her girlfriends anoint Her transcendental body with cooling substances like camphor, sandalpaste and so on, but these things immediately dry up and fall from Her burning body again. That is how afflicted She is out of separation from Her Prāṇa Vallabha! The *sakhīs* are thus continually engaged in anointing Śrī Rādhikā's limbs with sandalwoodpulp, lotusstems, green tender leaves and shoots and other cooling substances. Meanwhile, one *gopī* named Candanakalā comes and tells Rādhikā that the Queen of Vraja, Yaśodā, has ordered Her to cook Kṛṣṇa's evening-meal. After Rādhikā hears from Candanakalā about all the nectarean *līlās* that Kṛṣṇa was playing at His parental home, She personally begins to cook sweets for Him just to remain patient.[123] Śrī Siddha Kṛṣṇa dāsa Bābājī sings in his Prārthanāmṛta Taraṅgiṇī:

hā hā gāndharvike! vrajeśvarīra prerita; āsiyā candana-kalā kohibe tvarita
sāyaṁ kāle govindera bhojana nimitta; baṭaka nirmāna kori pāṭhāiyā dite
se vacanāmṛta tumi karṇe pāna kori; pakkānna śālāte yābe saṅge sahacarī
hā hā kṛpāmayi! mora heno daśā hobo; pakkānnera śālā kobe mārjana koribo
cullīra mājhete dāvānala viracibo; kaṭāha mārjana kori' tā' pore dharibo
nīra nārikela, ghṛta, cāmpā kalā, cini; godhūmera sūkṣma cūrṇa dhari dibo āni
maricādi cūrṇa kori dibo tuyā pāśe; caukīte bosibe tumi parama hariṣe
amṛta kelikā ādi koribe nirmāna; tā' dekhi dāsīra kobe juḍā'be nayāna

"O Gāndharvike! Candana-kalā, a *gopī* that was sent by Queen Yaśodā, quickly comes to You and tells You to make and send some cakes for Govinda's evening-meal. When You drink these ambrosial words through Your ears You immediately go to the kitchen with Your assistants. O merciful One! When can I attain that fortunate state that I can clean Your kitchen, make a fire in the hearth, clean the cauldron and put it on the hearth? I will bring water,

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123 Śrī Baṅgabihārī Vidyālaṅkāra writes: *he varoru varā cāsau pāka-caryādinā uru mahatī pūjyā ceti* "O Varoru! *varā* means cooking and *uru* means the greatest or worshipable. Thus Varoru here also means 'the greatest cook'.

coconuts, *ghī,* small bananas, sugar and farina and I will grind black pepper and hand that to You while You blissfully sit down on a stool. When will You delight the eyes of this maidservant by making Amṛta Kelikā-pies and other savouries for Your beloved?"

The preparations Svāminī singlehandedly cooks for Her Prāṇanātha in the evening, on the order of mother Yaśodā, are excellent. She does not wear many ornaments and She cooks alone. There's nobody around so She does not have many clothes on. The maidservant can thus relish the sweetness of Her scantily clad body, and she jokingly says:

tuyā aṅge vilepinu sucandra candana; se sab hoiyā gelo dhūlira samāna
e tāpa baṭakāvalī sādhana agnite; e ati āścarya śītala hoilo tvarite
e vacana śuni' dhani mora gaṇḍa-sthale; koribe aṅguli-ghāta ati sneha-bhare

(Prārthanāmṛta Taraṅginī)

"Hey Śyāmājū! The cooling sandalpaste and camphor I put on Your body to (to extinguish the fire of Your separation from Kṛṣṇa) swiftly turned into dust and powder! But how amazing! Now the fire You use to make cakes for Kṛṣṇa is quickly cooling You off!" Hearing these words You affectionately tap me on the cheek with Your finger."

Svāminī puts all the preparations on golden plates and covers them with sheets. She has full faith that Tulasī and the other maidservants will feed Kṛṣṇa as if She Herself is doing it. *mad vidhānām nija sakhīnām* means 'Your girlfriends, of whom I am one!' The practising devotee should also immerse himself in that *rasa*. Śrī Narottama Ṭhākura sings: *dehe nā koriho āsthā*: "Don't place your trust in the material body!" Trust should be placed in the spiritual body. "I am Your maidservant!" - what a beautiful introduction! *Kṛṣṇa dāsa abhimāne ye ānanda-sindhu; koṭi brahma-sukha nahe tāra eka bindu* (C.C.) "The bliss of *brahman* multiplied ten million times is not one drop compared to the ocean of bliss the devotee swims in when he considers himself to be Kṛṣṇa's servant". And the self-identification as Rādhā's maidservant is even more blissful than that! Rādhārāṇī considers the *kiṅkarīs* to be Her own: "My Rūpa! My Tulasi! My maidservant!" "O Svāmini! I don't want anything else but to belong to Your group! Please take me by the hand and accept me as Your maidservant!" A little of this great aspiration should also arise within the hearts of the practising devotee.

Svāminī now sends Tulasī off to Nandīśvara with Śyāmasundara's eatables. Tightly hugging her, She says: "Tulasi, go now! I cannot go Myself, but I will be as much satisfied when you feed Kṛṣṇa as when I would do it Myself!" How affectionate Svāminī is to Tulasī! The practising devotee should awaken feelings like: "O! Will I not get such affection from You even one day in my life? My heart cries for getting that affection! Have mercy and keep me at the feet of Your Rūpa and Your Tulasī!" Crying like this, the *sādhaka* will faint and bring down the shower of Svāminī's mercy. How mercifully Svāminī keeps the maidservant at Her chest! Such compassion, as the maidservants enjoy, cannot be found anywhere else. "O Svāmini! I want to spend my whole life with the awareness that I am Your maidservant!" If one cherishes this desire one will indeed be able to spend one's whole life in this mood.

Svāminī wears a thin *sārī*, not covering Her head with Her veil. She's in Her own home, saying: "Tulasi, go now! Feed Him nicely and then come back! You all know that I am controlled by My superiors! I cannot go Myself! When you keep your chest to Mine, then you will understand! Look into My eyes once!" Then She holds Tulasī to Her chest and lovingly hands her the dishes for Her Prāṇanātha. What an excellent service this is! The Gosvāmīs cried for such service with breaking hearts! "I have to serve Śyāma while my heart is merged in Svāminī's heart and my eyes have merged in Her eyes". Such a sweet service can not be found anywhere! As soon as Tulasī takes the plates from Svāminī's hands she does not feel anything

anymore. What a heartrending agony she feels when the vision stops. Raghunātha pitifully cries: "O Svāmini! When will You send Your preparations to Kṛṣṇa through me?"[135]

he varoru śrī rādhike! govinda mohinī; goṣṭheśvarī yaśodāra ājñā pāiyā tumi
bahu vidha sumiṣṭānna nāma parāmṛta; āpani prastuta kori nija icchā mata
lalitādi sakhī-vṛnda kiṁ vā mora hāte; bhojana sāmagrī yoto arpaṇa koribe
catur vidha paramānna vahana koriyā; yaśodāra kare dibo ānandita hoiyā
heno śubha kṣaṇa mora koto dine hobe; dāsa raghunātha kohe mañjarī svarūpe

"O nicely-thighed Śrī Rādhike! O enchantress of Govinda! When You receive the order from Goṣṭheśvarī Yaśodā You prepare many kinds of sweets named Parāmṛta, according to Your own wish." In his *mañjarī svarūpa* Raghunātha dāsa says: "When will that blessed day come when You will place these dishes in the hands of Lalitā and Your other *sakhīs*, or even in my hands? When can I blissfully carry these four kinds of delicious foodstuffs and place them into Mother Yaśodā's hands?" {Śrī Haripada Śila}

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VERSE 47:

NĪTĀNNA MAD-VIDHA LALĀṬA-TAṬE LALĀṬAṀ
PRĪTYĀ PRADĀYA MUDITĀ VRAJARĀJA RĀJÑĪ
PREMṆĀ PRASŪR IVA BHAVAT KUŚALASYA PṚCCHĀṀ
BHAVYE VIDHĀSYATI KADĀ MAYI TĀVAKATVĀT

nīta - brought; *anna* - eatables; *mad vidha* - like me; *lalāṭa* - forehead; *taṭe* - on the edge; *lalāṭam* - on the forehead; *prītyā* - with love; *pradāya* - given; *muditā* - happily; *vraja* - of Vraja; *rāja rājñī* - the Queen; *premṇā* - with love; *prasūḥ* - mother; *iva* - just like; *bhavat* - Your; *kuśalasya* - of welfare; *pṛcchāṁ* - inquires; *bhavye* - O beautiful, auspicious girl!; *vidhāsyati* - will do; *kadā* - when; *mayi* - to me; *tāvakatvāt* - because I am Yours.

O Bhavye (beautiful, auspicious girl)! When will the Queen of Vraja, as I bring her the sweets, hold her forehead on my forehead in loving joy as if she is my mother, and inquire about Your wellbeing, knowing me to be Yours?

Explanations: In a divine vision Śrī Raghunātha perceived his devotional service, and now that the vision is gone he prays. In this way it goes on continuously. Śrī Rādhikā sends Tulasī off to Nandīśvara with sweets for Kṛṣṇa. When Tulasī arrives at Nandīśvara she keeps the plate with eatables on a proper place and bows down to mother Yaśodā. Mother Yaśodā embraces Tulasī, affectionately holds her forehead on Tulasī's forehead, and asks her about Rādhikā's welfare. Śrī Rādhikā is called Bhavyā here, or auspicious girl, She who works for

[135] The last two paragraphs of this purport are narrated by Śrī Ānanda Gopāla Gosvāmī.

Kṛṣṇa's welfare. Mā Yaśodā loves Rādhikā as much as Her own mother Kīrtidā does and Śrīla Raghunātha Dāsa says: *vrajendra gṛhiṇī Kṛṣṇa prāya sneha niketanam* (Śrī Rādhikā 108 nāma Stotram) - she loves Rādhikā as much as she loves Kṛṣṇa even! How much mother Yaśodā loves Rādhārāṇī! Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī has written: *vatsalācyuta mātṛkā* "She is loved by Acyuta's mother" It was only seven or eight hours since Rādhikā was at Nandīśvara to cook Kṛṣṇa's breakfast, yet mother Yaśodā is already very anxious about Her welfare. How much Yaśodā loves the maidservants, knowing them to belong to Śrī Rādhā! She loves them as if she is their own mother! Śrī Raghunātha dāsa, who floats on the waves of prayer, directly perceives this pastime within his heart. Through their own example the *ācāryas* have shown that one must be very eager to attain one's beloved Lord. The devotee should never think: "Whatever I do, I'm satisfied with it!" It is the nature of devotion that one is never satiated with it.[124] In Bṛhad Bhāgavatāmṛta (1.7.135-139) Śrī Sanātana Gosvāmī describes how Nārada Muni prayed for the following boon:

śrī Kṛṣṇacandra kasyāpi tṛptir astu kadāpi na
bhavato'nugrahe bhaktau premni cānanda bhājane

"O Śrī Kṛṣṇacandra! May, by Your mercy, nobody ever be satiated with their love and devotion for You, for You are transcendental bliss personified!"
Śrī Kṛṣṇa replied:

vidagdha nikarācārya ko nāmāyaṁ varo mataḥ;
svabhāvo mat kṛpā bhakti premnāṁ vyakto'yam eva yat
prayāga tīrtham ārābhya bhrāmaṁ bhrāmam itas tataḥ;
atrāgatya ca ye dṛṣṭāḥ śrutaś ca bhavatā mune
sarve samasta sarvārthā jagan nistārakāś ca te;
mat kṛpā viṣayāḥ kiñcit tāratamyam śritāḥ paraṁ
tathāpi teṣām eko'pi na tṛpyati kathañcana;
tad gṛhāṇa varan anyān matto'bhīṣṭatarān varān

"O teacher of all clever arts! What kind of boon do you seek from Me? My devotion, My mercy and My love are naturally inexhaustible! You have wandered around everywhere, starting from Prayāga Tīrtha, hearing about My devotees and seeing them. They are all the objects of My mercy, they have all their desires fulfilled and they can deliver the whole world. Although You see that there are different levels of them, you can not see that any one of them is ever satiated with their devotion to Me. Therefore please pray for another boon to Me!" The devotee should know that his *bhajan* is in a diseased state if he feels satiated in his *sādhanā*. One can measure one's advancement and taste for *bhajan* in the way in which one is greedy, eager and unsatisfied with spiritual flavours. How eager Śrī Rūpa and Raghunātha were! Hearing it, even a stone heart will melt! Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī said: "You are *sukhamaya* and *sukhamayī*, You're always absorbed in blissful pastimes! I thought I would not show You how my heart is burning, but I cannot keep from telling You anymore! See how Your Rūpa's heart is burning: *udghāṭayāmi jvalataḥ kaṭhorāṁ bāṣpasya mudrāṁ hṛdi mudritasya* (Utkalikā Vallari: 1). "All the pastime-places are still here, right before my eyes , and even today these pastimes are going on. But I don't get any response! Your pastimes are not floating upon my eyes!" A devotee should wander around like mad in this way. Śrī Rūpa and Raghunātha stayed under different trees every night, just to experience the different spiritual pastimes that Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa were performing at each place. When the devotee is in Vraja, he should feel: "Even now Your pastimes are going on here! Why I cannot see them? Please let me see what pastimes are going on now! Let me be so fortunate! Why can't I see Vṛndāvana as Your real, actual

[124] This explanation is given by Śrī Ānanda Gopāla Gosvāmī.

playground?" Śrī Raghunātha has chosen Śrī Rādhā's dearmost playground Śrī Rādhākuṇḍa as his place of worship, and by the mercy of the *kuṇḍa* he directly perceives all Her transcendental pastimes. Now he is not Raghunātha, he is Tulasī Mañjarī: "Mother Yaśodā holds her forehead on my forehead and asks me about Śrī Rādhikā's welfare, saying: 'How is my Rādhikā?' Will I not even experience one drop of this affection?" The neophyte devotees should lament like this also. Mā Yaśodā loves the *kiṅkarīs* so much because she knows that they belong to Śrī Rādhā. Rādhārāṇī's affection is infused in Her maidservants and when mother Yaśodā sees them she is as happy as when she sees Rādhārāṇī Herself. Blessed is Śrī Rādhā's service! The devotees should eagerly wander from forest to forest of Vraja, crying and crying: "Ohe Vṛndāvana! O Vṛndāvana's inhabitants! O Vṛndāvana's sky, wind, trees, vines, deer and birds! Let everyone know that I am Rādhā's maidservant! You all be kind to me! Make this consciousness within me very firm! O Rādhe! Where are You? This whole forest is illuminated by Your golden splendour! Keep me (spiritually) alive with just one drop of this luster! I don't have anyone else but You!"[125]

adhama durgata jane, kevala karunā mone,
tribhuvane e yaśa kheyāti
śuniyā sādhura mukhe, śaraṇa loinu sukhe,
upekhile nāhi mora gati

(Śrī Narottama's Prārthanā)

"You are famous throughout the three worlds for being so compassionate on the fallen and unfortunate souls. Hearing this from the mouths of the *sādhus* I have joyfully taken shelter of You. Don't let me down, You are My shelter!"

"I'm living in Vṛndāvana, the kingdom of devotional enthusiasm, but I'm simply engrossed in bodily consciousness. How unfortunate I am! When I hear and chant the great words of the *ācāryas* I will certainly attain that devotional eagerness. Then I will wander from forest to forest, crying: "Where are You, O Rādhārāṇī? Your golden lustre illuminates the whole of Vṛndāvana! My mind and eyes subsist on a mere drop of this lustre!" Day and night there will be only this prayer in the heart:

hari hari! heno dina ki hoibe āmāra?
doṅha aṅga paraśibo, duhuṅ aṅga nirakhibo,
sevana koribo doṅhākāra

"Hari Hari! When will that day be mine when I can touch Their bodies, see Them, and serve Them?"

lalitā viśākhā saṅge, sevana koribo raṅge,
mālā gāṅthi dibo nānā phule
kanaka sampuṭa kori, karpūra tāmbūla bhori,
yogāibo adhara yugale

"I will blissfully render service with Lalitā and Viśākhā, stringing garlands of different flowers. I fill up a golden basket with camphor and betelleaves and place them on Their lips."

rādhā Kṛṣṇa vṛndāvana, sei mora prāṇa dhana,
sei mora jīvana upāya
jaya patita pāvana, deho more ei dhana,

[125] Purport by Śrī Ānanda Gopāla Gosvāmī.

tuyā vine anya nāhi bhāya

(Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura, Prārthanā)

"Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa and Vṛndāvana are the treasure of my heart and the means of my subsistence. All glories to the saviour of the fallen! Please give me this treasure! I don't want anything else but that!" This is the pure experience of the *ācāryas*: "I don't want anything else but that!" We should stay in the Vraja-vana in this mood, not having a liking for anything else. "But unfortunately a soul like me likes many other things, despite living in the Vraja-vana: profit, adoration, distinction, money and whatnot. Where will I find this treasure of my heart, for whom I have given up everything to come to Vraja, Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa? There's no other hope than Their mercy!"

Tulasī enjoys mother Yaśodā's affection. Mother Yaśodā engages Śrī Rādhikā in cooking for her Gopāla because she knows that it will increase His lifespan, His health and His beauty. This purpose is clearly visible in her eyes. How much possessiveness she feels for the eatables that were cooked by Rādhikā's own hands! Mother Yaśodā is Gopāla's Kalyāṇa-kāriṇī, she who arranges for Gopāla's welfare. This is clearly visible in her eyes. Tulasī understands her mood and thus calls Rādhikā 'Bhavye', She who works for Kṛṣṇa's welfare. Tulasī's heart is filled with Mother Yaśodā's affection and Śrī Rādhikā's great glories and this makes her very proud. Suddenly the divine vision vanishes and anxiously Raghunātha dāsa falls on the bank of Rādhākuṇḍa and prays for devotional service.

Śrī Rasika-Candra Dāsa sings:

he rādhike maṅgala rūpini!
tomāra ādeśa pāiyā, vividha miṣṭānna loiyā,
yābo kobe yathā nandarāṇī

"O Rādhike! You are the very form of auspiciousness! Receiving Your order I will take different kinds of sweets and go to Nandarāṇī (Queen Yaśodā)"

ānande se sab thuyā, lalāṭe lalāṭa diyā,
jananīra mata sneha bhare
tomāra kuśala kathā, jijñāsibe śrī yaśodā,
tava nija sakhī jāni more

"Mother Yaśodā will blisfully put everything away and then place her forehead to my forehead full of affection, as if she is my mother. Then she will enquire about Your welfare, knowing me to be Your girlfriend!"

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VERSE 48:

KṚṢṆA VAKTRĀMBUJOCCHIṢṬAṀ PRASĀDAṀ PARAM ĀDARĀT
DATTAṀ DHANIṢṬHAYĀ DEVI KIM ANEṢYĀMI TE 'GRATAḤ

Kṛṣṇa - Kṛṣṇa; *vaktra* - mouth; *ambuja* - lotus; *ucchiṣṭam* - remnants; *prasādam* - mercy; *paraṁ* - supreme; *ādarāt* - out of affection; *dattaṁ* - given; *dhaniṣṭhayā* - by Dhaniṣṭhā; *devi* - O Goddess!; *kim* - whether; *aneṣyāmi* - I will take; *te* - Your; *agrataḥ* - before.

O Devi (goddess)! When will I most affectionately bring the remnants from Kṛṣṇa's lotuslike mouth, that were given to me by Dhaniṣṭhā, before You?

Explanations: How wonderful is Śrī Raghunātha's devotional service in full *svarūpāveśa*! On Svāminī's order Tulasī has gone to Nandīśvara to serve Śyāmasundara Her own cooked dishes there. After Śyāmasundara has eaten, mother Yaśodā lovingly gives some of His sweet remnants to Tulasī, so that she can bring them to Svāminī. Dhaniṣṭhā had secretly mixed some of Kṛṣṇa's *adharāmṛta* (lip-nectar, or food-remnants) in it. Śrī Kṛṣṇa knew what Dhaniṣṭhā wanted, so, while giving her a hint with His eyes, He spat some food out as if He did not like it. Dhaniṣṭhā picked that food up and mixed it with the sweets that Yaśodā had reserved for Śrī Rādhikā. Dhaniṣṭhā is responsible for all devotional services at Nandīśvara, as is Kundalatā. Both of them are very attached to the Loving Pair. They know what is on Their minds and they render their services in secret, unnoticed by others. All this can only be understood by unfolding one's *svarūpa*. A person who is absorbed in bodily consciousness is not qualified to render these confidential services to the Śrī Yugala. How deeply Śrī Dāsa Gosvāmī is absorbed in his *svarūpa*! How vividly he experiences these services! Can the *sādhaka* continue when he does not even experience a little of this kind of devotional service? How I wasted such a pure life with all kinds of external dealings! When will I cry for Svāminī with a breaking heart?

tomāra se āmi, āmi āra kāru noi; tomā vine nāhi jīe nivedaye tāi
ihā jāni devi! tumi more kṛpā kori; nija pāda padma pāśe koro anucarī

"I am Yours and no-one else's! I cannot live without You, and therefore I pray to You: "O Devi! If You know this, then be so merciful and take me to Your lotus feet, making me Your maidservant!" "My heart is always open for She Who is millions of times dearer to me than my own heart. I must surely get a response from Her! To whom shall I speak of my feelings? I don't have anyone else in this world!" The desire must be very strong. The activities of the *ācāryas* is the target. Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī cried out:

hanta sāndra karuṇā sudhā-jharī pūrṇa mānasa hradau prasīdatam
durjane'tra diśatam rater nija prekṣaṇa pratibhuvaś chaṭām api

(Utkalikā Vallari - 16)

"O Rādhe! O Kṛṣṇa! The lakes of Your minds are filled with nectarstreams of deep compassion! Be pleased with this wicked soul! Please show me the luster of love that is the guarantee of seeing You!" Why is *rati* the guarantee? *ahaṁtā ca prāpsyamāne sevopayoginī siddha dehe praviśyantīva sādhaka śarīram prāyo jahātīva virājata mamatā ca tac caraṇāravinda makaranda eva madhukarī bhavitum upakrameteti* (Mādhurya Kādambinī - 7th Shower) Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī writes that when *rati* appears the devotee's feeling of 'I-ness' (self-identitification) enters into the spiritual body, which is fit for the execution of devotional service, and it is as if he leaves his material devotee-body (*sādhaka-śarīra*). The feeling of mineness then turns into a bumblebee that is very thirsty for the honey that trickles from the Lord's lotus feet". The *ācāryas* are in the kingdom of *mahā bhāva*. Holding straws between their teeth, they are loudly crying: "I cannot tolerate this waiting anymore! Quickly make the tree of my aspirations bear fruit!" *kuruṣva kṣipraṁ me phalatu nitarāṁ tarṣa viṭapī* (Utkalikā Vallari). In this way they cry out

for Svāminī and call Her. How merciful the *ācāryas* are for recording their transcendental experiences in their books! If Svāminī's mercy comes from within their *smaraṇa* or their experiences then we will sell our hearts to their lotus feet. Śrī Raghunātha dāsa eagerly cries out: "O my lords Rūpa and Sanātana!" The worship of Vraja is one of faithful allegiance. Because the goddess of Vaikuṇṭha, Kamalā-devī, did not accept the mood of Vraja she could not attain Govinda's devotional service, despite performing so many austerities - *tap kore tabu nāhi pāya*. By following in the footsteps of the *gopīs* the Upaniṣads and the sages of the Daṇḍaka-forest attained the service of Śrī Kṛṣṇa (in Vraja). In Caitanya Caritāmṛta (Madhya 9) it is described:

śruti sab gopīgaṇera anugata hoiyā; vrajeśvarī-suta bhaje gopī-bhāva loiyā
vyūhāntare gopī-deha vraje yabe pāilo; sei dehe Kṛṣṇa saṅge rāsa-krīḍā koilo
gopa-jāti Kṛṣṇa - gopī preyasī tāhāra; devī vā anya strī Kṛṣṇa nā kore aṅgīkāra
lakṣmī cāhe sei dehe kṛṣṇera saṅgama; gopikā anugā hoiyā nā koilo bhajan
anya dehe nā pāiye rāsa vilāsa; ataeva nāyam śloka kohe vedavyāsa

"The Upaniṣads all followed the *gopīs*. Accepting the mood of the *gopīs* they worshiped the son of the Queen of Vraja and thus attained a place in the *gopī*-group in Vraja. In these bodies they could associate with Kṛṣṇa in the Rāsa-*līlā*. Kṛṣṇa is born amongst the cowherders and the *gopīs* are His beloveds. Kṛṣṇa does not accept goddesses or any other kind of women for His consorts. The goddess of fortune, Lakṣmī, wanted to unite with Kṛṣṇa in Her selfsame body, but she did not worship Him in allegiance to the *gopīkās*. In other bodies (other than a *gopī*-body) the Rāsa-*līlā* cannot be attained, therefore Veda-Vyāsa spoke the verse *nāyaṁ śriyo'ṅga u nitanta rateḥ prasāda* ("Even the goddess of fortune did not attain Kṛṣṇa's great loving mercy like the *gopīs* did." Bhāgavata 10.47.61)." Allegiance to the *gopīs* reaches perfection in hearing, chanting and remembering the eager prayers of the *ācāryas*. That is why it is called an internal *sādhanā*.

Meanwhile, in Yāvat (Rādhā's in-laws' abode), after sending Tulasī to Nandīśvara, Śrī Rādhikā has fainted out of powerful feelings of separation from Kṛṣṇa and the *sakhīs* are unable to bring Her back to Her senses. Then Tulasī comes back from Nandīśvara.

tad viśleṣa-jvara sama lave'pyakṣamā yarhyabhūvan
gāndharvāyā visa kiśalayośīra candrāmbujādyāḥ
kāpyāgatya vyadhita lalitādeśatas tarhi tasyās
tad vṛttāntāmṛta rasa pṛṣat secanaṁ karṇa-randhre

(Kṛṣṇa Bhāvanāmṛta 17,7)

"Even cool things like lotusstems, lotuspollen, *uśīra* (vertiver), camphor, sandalpaste and lotus flowers were not able to bring down Gāndharvikā's (Śrī Rādhikā's) hot fever of separation from Kṛṣṇa. Just then one *sakhī* (Tulasī) came from Nandīśvara and began to sprinkle Her earholes with drops of the nectar-like stories about Kṛṣṇa, being ordered by Lalitā." Śrī Rādhikā immediately comes back to Her senses, sits down and says: "O *sakhi*! In My dream My desert-like ears suddenly felt a shower of nectar!" Lalitā says: *āyāteyaṁ sumukhi! tulasī mañjarī goṣṭha rājñā gehāt sakhyus tava yadavad vṛttam asmād ajāgaḥ* "O Fairfaced *sakhi*! It is Tulasī Mañjarī, who has come back from the abode of the Queen of Vraja! She brought You back to Your senses by sprinkling You with the nectar of Your friend Kṛṣṇa's pastimes!" Svāminī sees Tulasī before Her and embraces her. Svāminījī has an extraordinary love for Tulasī. She knows that Tulasī has come back after serving Her wholeheartedly. Again Tulasī serves her Svāminī in an extraordinary way by sprinkling Her ears with the nectar of Kṛṣṇa's afternoon-pastimes. Svāminī asks Tulasī: "What did mother (Yaśodā) say?" Tulasī says:

"Hey Śyāmājū! How can I describe mother Yaśodā's affection as she held her forehead on mine, calling me Your maidservant?"

āmāra lalāṭe lalāṭa prīte diyā; preme matta hoiyā tomāra kuśala puchiyā
tomāra-i āmi ihā jāni vraja-rāṇī; sneha kori koto prīta korilā āpani

(Prārthanāmṛta Taraṅginī)

"Lovingly she held her forehead on my forehead and inquired about Your welfare, intoxicated by ecstatic love. How much love the Queen of Vraja gave me, knowing me to be Yours!"

Svāminī pulls Tulasī on Her lap and repeatedly asks her: "He has eaten nicely, hasn't He? I couldn't cook so nicely! I'm sure He didn't like the sweets! You were close by, weren't you?" Svāminī thoroughly questions Tulasī, and fortunate Tulasī gives sweet answers to all the questions, thus rendering a wonderful service by submerging Svāminī in the nectar-ocean of talks about Kṛṣṇa: "Dhaniṣṭhā has given me some remnants of Kṛṣṇa's food and I brought it with me for You!"

Śrī Rādhikā is like a Cātakī-bird that does not eat anything else but the nectar from Kṛṣṇa's lips. As soon as She hears about this nectar the thirst of Her ears and Her heart is immediately quenched. "Didn't He say anything to you?", She asks Tulasī. "How can He, in front of His superiors?", Tulasī answers. "With His eyes He asked me if He could meet You tonight in Vṛndāvana and I told Him, also with the hints from my eyes, "Surely You will meet Her!" Svāminī says: "Tulasi! Look at Me once! I'm so unfortunate that I could not see Him personally! Let Me see if He is hidden in your eyes or not!", and She gazes in Tulasī's eyes without blinking. Her eyes are full of tears and Her body is shivering of ecstatic love. "When I look into your eyes I can understand that you have seen Him! Otherwise your eyes could never have been so beautiful!", Svāminī says. What a wonderful service Tulasī is rendering by carrying Kṛṣṇa's picture to Svāminī in her eyes! Blessed is this maidservant! Now Śrīmatī starts to take Her meal. How wonderful is Tulasī's expertise in devotional service![126]
Śrī Haripada Śila sings:

he rādhe guṇavati āmāra īśvarī; koto ye manera sādha nivedana kori
śrī dhaniṣṭhā priya sakhī parama ādare; Kṛṣṇa bhukta avaśeṣa dibe mora kare
Kṛṣṇa phelā mastakete koriyā bohon; tomāra agrete āni koribo arpaṇa
prasādera gandhe daraśane unmādinī; nayana bhariyā kobe dekhibo go āmi

"O Guṇavati (qualified girl) Rādhe! O my Mistress! I pray to You so fervently: "When will Śrī Dhaniṣṭhā, Your dearest girlfriend, most carefully hand me Kṛṣṇa's food-remnants? When will I carry Kṛṣṇa's remnants on my head and place them before You? When can I fill my eyes with the sweet vision of Unmādinī (love-intoxicated Rāi) seeing and smelling the *prasāda*?"

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VERSE 49:

NĀNĀ VIDHAIR AMṚTA SĀRA RASĀYANAIS TAIḤ
KṚṢṆA PRASĀDA MILITAIR IHA BHOJYA PEYAIḤ

[126] Entire purport by Śrī Ānanda Gopāla Gosvāmī.

HĀ KUṄKUMĀṄGI LALITĀDI SAKHĪVṚTĀ TVAṀ
YATNĀN MAYĀ KIM UTARĀM UPABHOJANĪYĀ

nānā - various; *vidhaiḥ* - kinds; *amṛta* - nectar; *sāra* - essence; *rasāyanaiḥ* - with elixers; *taiḥ* - with them; *Kṛṣṇa* - Kṛṣṇa; *prasāda* - mercy; *militaiḥ* - by mixing; *iha* - here; *bhojya* - eatables; *peyaiḥ* - drinks; *hā* - O!; *kuṅkumāṅgi* - girl whose body shines like vermilion; *lalitā* - Lalitā; *ādi* - and others; *sakhī*- girlfriends; *vṛtā* - surrounded; *tvaṁ* - You; *yatnāt* - with care; *mayā* - by me; *kim u* - whether; *tarām* - more; *upabhojanīyā* - to be enjoyed.

O Kuṅkumāṅgi (girl whose body shines like vermilion)! When will I carefully serve You the many kinds of remnants left by Kṛṣṇa, that are like an elixir of the quintessence of nectar, mixed with other eatables and drinks, as You sit down, surrounded by Lalitā and other girlfriends?

Explanations: In a transcendental vision Śrī Raghunātha sees Svāminī's sweet *bhojana-līlā* (eating-pastimes). Tulasī has brought Śyāma's *adharāmṛta* (lip-nectar, or food-remnants). Even a fibre of Madana Mohana's *adharāmṛta* is *sukṛti labhya phelā lava*, only attainable by a lot of pious merit.

kṛṣṇera ye bhukta śeṣa tāra phelā nāma; tāra eka lava pāya sei bhāgyavān
sāmānya bhāgya hoite tāra prāpti nāhi hoy; kṛṣṇera yā'te pūrṇa kṛpā sei tāhā pāy
sukṛti śabde kohe - Kṛṣṇa kṛpā hetu puṇya; sei yāra hoy phelā pāya sei dhanya

"Kṛṣṇa's food-remnants are called *phelā,* and anyone who gets even a fibre of it is very lucky. These remnants are not available through ordinary luck - only a person who has gotten Kṛṣṇa's full mercy gets it. The word *sukṛti* here means merit which is attained by Kṛṣṇa's personal mercy. A person who gets this *phelā* is greatly fortunate." (Caitanya Caritāmṛta Antya 16) This *prasāda* is relishable according to one's amount of love for Kṛṣṇa. Rādhārāṇī loves Kṛṣṇa the most, and therefore She also relishes His *prasāda* to the utmost! *sa me madana mohanaḥ sakhi tanoti jihvā-spṛhām* "O *sakhi*! This Madana Mohana increases the yearning of My tongue!" (Govinda Līlāmṛta). How Śrīmatī relishes this nectar is best understood from Caitanya Caritāmṛta (Antya līlā chapter 16), which describes how Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, in Śrīmatī Rādhikā's mood, relishes Lord Jagannātha's Gopāla Vallabha-*prasāda* at Jagannātha Purī:

koṭi amṛta svādu pāiyā prabhura camatkāra; sarvāṅge pulaka netre bohe aśru-dhāra
ei dravye eto svādu kāhā hoite āilo; kṛṣṇera adharāmṛta ihā sañcārilo

"Tasting these dishes, that were millions of times more relishable than nectar, the Lord became astonished. He had goosepimples of ecstasy all over His body and tears of love flowed from His eyes. He thought to Himself: "Where has such a delicious food come from? Kṛṣṇa's lip-nectar is infused in it!" Mahāprabhu relished a little of this food and then told Govinda to tie the rest in the end of his *dhotī* and take it along. The whole day Mahāprabhu was deeply absorbed in Kṛṣṇa's *adharāmṛta.* When the evening came one star-like devotee after the other came to surround the golden Gaura-moon and a stream of Kṛṣṇa-*kathā* took its rise. On the Lord's indication Govinda began to distribute the *prasāda* that he kept in his robe to everyone present. The Lord then began to explain the glories of the *prasāda:*

prabhu kohe - ei sab prakṛta dravya; aikṣava karpūra marica elāci labaṅga gavya
rasavāsa guḍatvak ādi yoto saba; prākṛta vastura svādu, sabhāra anubhava
sei dravyera ei svādu gandha lokātīta; āsvāda koriyā dekho sabhāra pratīta
āsvāda dūre rahu yār gandhe māte mana; āpanā vinu anya mādhurya korāy vismārana
tā'te ei dravye kṛṣṇādhara sparśa hoilo; adharera guṇa sab ihāte sañcārilo
alaukika gandha svādu - anya vismārana; mahā mādaka ei kṛṣṇādharera guṇa

"The Lord said: "These ingredients, like cane-sugar, camphor, black pepper, cardamom, cloves, *ghī*, spices and licorice, are all material. Everyone has tasted them before. But now these dishes have an extraordinary taste and fragrance. Everyone should taste it and experience the difference. What to speak of the taste, even the fragrance is maddening and makes one forget all other sweetnesses but its own! The nectar of Kṛṣṇa's lips have touched it and has infused the qualities of these lips in the food. The attributes of Kṛṣṇa's lips are greatly intoxicating and their extraordinary fragrance and taste make one forget all other experiences." Just as Śrī Rādhikā secretly relishes the nectar of Kṛṣṇa's lips with Her *sakhīs* Mahāprabhu relished this nectar in secret with Śrī Svarūpa Dāmodara and Śrī Rāmānanda Rāya:

tanu mana kore kṣobha, bāḍhāya surata lobha,
harṣa śokādi bhāva vināśoy
pāsarāya anya rasa, jagat kore ātmavaśa,
lajjā dharma dhairya kore kṣoya

nāgara, śuno! tomāra adhara carita
mātāya nārīra mona, jihvā kore ākarṣana,
vicārite sab viparīta!

"O hero! Listen to the nature of Your lips! They agitate the body and mind, increase lusty desires and destroy all other sentiments like joy and sorrow! They make one forget all other flavours, they control the whole world and destroy saintly qualities such as shyness, religiousness and patience! They madden the minds of the women, attract the tongue and turn all situations upside down!"

āchuka nārīra kāja, kohite vāsiye lāja,
tomāra adhara boḍo dhṛṣṭa rāya
puruṣe kore ākarṣana, āpanā piyāite mana,
anya rasa sab pāsarāya

"This may be the work of women, but I am ashamed to say that Your lips are so bold that they even attract Your flute, which is male. They make it drink as much nectar as they like and make it forget all other flavours!"

sacetana rahu dūre, acetana sacetana kore,
tomāra adhara - boḍo bājikara
tomāra veṇu śuṣkendhana, tāra janmāya indriya mana,
tāra āpanā piyāya nirantara

"What to speak of conscious beings, they make even unconscious beings conscious! Your lips are great magicians! Your flute is just a dry piece of wood, but Your lips give it a mind and senses and make it drink themselves!"

veṇu dhṛṣṭa puruṣa hoiyā, puruṣādhara piyā piyā,

gopī-gaṇe jānāya nija pāna,
aho śuno gopī-gaṇa, bole piyo tomāra dhana
tomāra yadi thāke abhimāna

"This flute is a bold male who drinks the lips of another male, telling the *gopīs*: "O *gopīs*! Listen! Drink Your property by force if you think you can!"

tabe more krodha kori, lajjā bhaya dharma chāḍi,
chāḍi dimu koro āsi pāna
nahe pimu nirantara, tomāya mora nāhiko ḍara,
anye dekhoṅ tṛṇera samāna

"Then the flute angrily told Me: "Give up Your shame, fear and religion and come to drink the nectar of Kṛṣṇa's lips! On that condition I shall give them up. If you don't give up your attachments to virtue, though, I will keep on drinking it forever more. I'm a little afraid of You *gopīs*, for you may have the power to compete with me, but all others I consider to be no more than blades of grass!"

.....
adharera ei rīti, āra śuno kunīti,
se adhara sane yāra melā
sei bhakṣya bhojya pāna, hoy amṛta samāna,
nāma tāra hoy Kṛṣṇa phelā

"O, listen to the manners of these lips and other injustices! Everything that is touched by these lips - like food and drinks - becomes just like nectar and is called *Kṛṣṇa phelā*."

se phelāra eka lava, nā pāya devatā saba
e dambhe kebā pātiyāya?
bahu janma puṇya kore, tabe sukṛti nāma dhare,
se sukṛte tāra lava pāya

"Even the *devatās* cannot get one drop of this *phelā*. Who can fathom the pride of this *phelā*? By performing pious activities for many births one becomes known as a virtuous man, and such a person may get a fibre of this *phelā*!" {Caitanya Caritāmṛta}

Fortunate Tulasī makes Bhāvamayī and Her *sakhīs* relish Kṛṣṇa's lip-nectar. The devotees will be consoled by the remembrance of these pastimes. The all-enchanting nature of Rādhikā's names, forms, qualities and pastimes cause the experience of sweetness, and this takes the consciousness forwards. The forms, qualities and pastimes of the beloved deity then become the quintessence of a devotee's life. Absorbed in experiencing Śyāmasundara's sweetness, Śrī Līlāśuka told Him:

premadaṁ ca me kāmadaṁ ca me vedanaṁ ca me vaibhavaṁ ca me
jīvanaṁ ca me jīvitaṁ ca me daivataṁ ca me deva nāparam

(Kṛṣṇa Karṇāmṛta 104)

"O Lord! You are My giver of love, the fulfiller of my desires, the bestower of devotional knowledge and the treasure of my heart. You and no-one else are my life and my fate!" To this Śrī Kṛṣṇa said: "Very well, Līlāśuka! Very well! I have become very pleased with your loyalty to Me! My *darśana* will never be in vain for you! Please pray for a boon to Me!" Then Līlāśuka prayed for the following boon:

mādhuryena vivardhantāṁ vāco nas tava vaibhave
cāpalyena vivardhantāṁ cintā nas tava śaiśave

"May our words be increased by Your sweetness! May You increase the stream of our thoughts, so that we will be able to remember the sweetness of Your naughty adolescence!" (Kṛṣṇa Karṇāmṛta 105) The words of the *ācāryas* are the support for the weak devotees; they will remove their bodily consciousness and bring them a deep spiritual consciousness, in which they can relish the sweetness of Śrī-Śrī Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa.

Tulasī says: "O Kuṅkumāṅgi! I will serve You different kinds of nectarean food and drinks while You assemble with Your girlfriends to taste the nectar of Kṛṣṇa's lips! Svāminī's bodily lustre now resembles fresh *kuṅkuma* from Kashmir, touched with some sandalpaste. It's a reddish glow that comes out from within Her, showing Her heart's passion for Kṛṣṇa (passion is symbolised by red colour). That is why Tulasī calls Her Kunkumāṅgi here.[127] In each dish Svāminī tastes the nectar of Kṛṣṇa's lips. When Svāminī tastes Kṛṣṇa's nectarean foodremnants it is as if She touches His lips directly, because the food has taken all their qualities. The maidservants feed Kṛṣṇa Premonmādinī (She who is mad with love for Kṛṣṇa) Rādhikā, Who remembers so many pastimes She had with Kṛṣṇa at that time! She closes Her eyes half when She is immersed in such sweet remembrance. It is as if She is drifting off somewhere else. The *kiṅkarīs* make Her relish according to Her feelings. Lalitā and the *sakhīs* also help Her to enter the Śyāma-ocean by joking with Her about Her divine pastimes with Kṛṣṇa. Nāgara Kṛṣṇa makes Himself useful by becoming the subject of these emotional talks. What more can He attain than this? No words can express how sweet, effulgent and beautiful Śrīmatī Rādhikā is! She makes even Kṛṣṇa's life useful![128] That's why Kṛṣṇa became greedy for Her mood, and that's why He came in the golden form of Gaura: to float in this *rasa* Himself and to make the whole world float in it concomitantly.

Śrī Rādhikā does not relish the eatables, She relishes the nectar of Kṛṣṇa's lips, while Her mind is absorbed in remembering Her extraordinary pastimes with Him. In the *kuñja*-pastimes She directly relishes this lip-nectar. How many hundreds of loving moods doesn't She express through Her eyes and Her face then? Tulasī carefully feeds Svāminī (*yatnāt*), because she knows that She experiences Śyāmasundara's presence in the dishes. She feeds Svāminī according to the pastime-flavours she makes Her relish. Svāminī is mad with love for Kṛṣṇa; is it so easy to serve Her? When Lord Caitanya, who was greedy after the ecstatic love of Śrī Rādhā, relished this pastime in the Gambhīrā he stared at Svarūpa Dāmodara's and Rāmānanda Rāya's faces and said: "Where have you brought Me?" How many wonderful feelings He expressed through His face and His eyes! Svarūpa and Rāma Rāya understood the Lord's mind and helped Him to relish these pastimes - *svarūpa gāya vidyāpati, gīta govinda gīti, śuni prabhura juḍāilo kāna* (Caitanya Caritāmṛta) "Svarūpa Dāmodara sang songs of Vidyāpati and from Gīta Govinda that soothed the Lord's ears.'

Tulasī understands Svāminī's mind completely, and she carefully feeds Her accordingly. Śrīla Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī has mercifully left the remnants of his transcendental revelations on paper for the practising devotee of today. "(Alas!) Whatever is understandable, having received the mercy of such a great *ācārya*, I do not understand, and whatever can now be locked within the heart I do not lock within my heart!" Śrī Raghunātha dāsa has offered himself to Svāminī's feet. Śrī Rādhikā, who is mad with love for Kṛṣṇa, has

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[127] Śrī Baṅgabihārī Vidyālaṅkāra adds: *he kuṅkumāṅgi śrī kṛṣṇa bhojanāpekṣayā svasyā bhojanīyatvena yad aṅga-mālinyaṁ tad ācchādanāya kuṅkuma liptam aṅgam yasyā* "Her body turned grey because of waiting for Kṛṣṇa's meal and to conceal this greyness She is anointed with *kuṅkuma*."

[128] Explanation by Śrī Ānanda Gopāla Gosvāmī.

now relished the nectar of Kṛṣṇa's lips. Suddenly the vision vanishes and Śrī Raghunātha pitifully prays:

kuṅkumāṅgi he gaurāṅgi vṛṣabhānu sutā; lalitādi sakhīgaṇe hoiyā veṣṭitā
aparūpa mad īśvarī śrī maṇi mandire; kṛṣṇera adharāmṛta daraśana kore
sabāra ānanda mana āsvādana tare; mahā prasāda dibo āmi ratna thālā bhare
sakhī saṅge raṅge tomāya korābo bhojana; nayana bhariyā uhā koribo darśana

"O Kunkumāṅgi! O Gaurāṅgi! O daughter of Vṛṣabhānu! How wonderfully You are sitting in Your wonderful jewelled temple, surrounded by Your girlfriends like Lalitā, looking at the nectar that emanates from Kṛṣṇa's lips! I will bring the *mahā-prasāda* on jewelled plates while everyone's mind is reeling of ecstasy. When can I feed You and Your *sakhīs* and fill my eyes with Your sweet vision?" (Śrī Haripada Śila)

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VERSE 50:

PĀNĀYA VĀRI MADHURAṀ NAVA PĀṬALĀDI
KARPŪRA VĀSITATARAṀ TARALĀKṢI DATTVĀ
KĀLE KADĀ TAVA MAYĀCAMANĪYA DANTA-
KĀṢṬHĀDIKAṀ PRAṆAYATAḤ PARAM ARPAṆĪYAM

pānāya - for drinking; *vāri* - water; *madhuraṁ* - sweet; *nava* - fresh; *pāṭala* - rose; *ādi* - etc.; *karpūra* - camphor; *vāsitataraṁ* - more scented; *taralākṣi* - girl with restless eyes; *dattvā* - having given; *kāle* - in time; *kadā* - when; *tava* - Your; *mayā* - by me; *ācamanīya* - for washing the mouth; *danta* - teeth; *kāṣṭhā* - twig; *ādikaṁ* - beginning with; *praṇayataḥ* - out of love; *param* - great; *arpaṇīyam* - to be offered.

O Taralākṣi (restless eyed girl)! When will the time come when I can offer You sweet drinking water scented with fresh roses and camphor for flushing Your mouth, along with a twig for brushing Your teeth?

Explanations: During deep transcendental visions Śrī Raghunātha relishes the sweetness of devotional service as if he is directly with Svāminī, and when the revelation disappears he laments while remembering the pastimes he had attained. How severely the fire of the remembrance of his lost joy burns! The remembrance of this joy increases the severity of his suffering. And then he swims in an ocean of bliss once more, as another transcendental revelation comes to him. In this way the stream of the devotee's life flows on, like a succession of the light of union and the darkness of separation. Śrī Rādhikā and Her *sakhīs* have relished the nectar of Kṛṣṇa's lips (the remnants of His food), and now Tulasī serves drinkingwater, sweetened with the flavour of roses and camphor. Śrīmatī's eyes are restless also then. She doesn't know whether She tastes the nectar of Kṛṣṇa's lips or whether She eats the remnants

of His food! When She meets Kṛṣṇa She relishes *rasollāsa* and when She is separated from Him She tastes *bhāvollāsa*. She feels a deeper bliss when She is separated from Kṛṣṇa then when She is together with Him. Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī writes:

dviguṇā virahārtiḥ syāt sphuraṇe veṇurāgaje
prādurbhāve bhavaty atra sarvābhīṣṭa sukhotsavaḥ

(Ujjvala Nīlamaṇi, Śṛṅgāra bheda 205)

"The pain of separation doubles during the revelation that comes forth from *anurāga*, and in this manifestation one feels a festival of bliss that is coveted by all." Therefore, when Svāminī is *viyoginī* (separated) She is also *saṁyoginī* (united). She is always *Kṛṣṇamayī* (absorbed in Kṛṣṇa). *aruṇa nayānera koṇe, ceyechilo āmā pāne, parāṇe barasi diyā ṭāne* "When He stares at Me from the corners of His ruddy eyes He throws out a fishhook that pulls at My heart." There is no way to fathom the joy and/or distress She feels from this pulling. Pure transcendental sweetness can be relished when it is pressed out by feelings of separation. Gradually and shockwise Śyāma's crystallized sound, touch, form, taste and smell can be relished then. Slowly and with interruptions Svāminī relishes this. As Svāminī meditates like that it is as if Śyāma appears before Her concretely. This is why She is called Taralākṣi, or fickle-eyed girl, in this verse. The sweetness of clearly seeing Kṛṣṇa enlivens the eyes. Even endlessly sweet Śyāmasundara is fully subdued when He sees the natural sweetness of Rādhikā's glances:

nija madhurima mudrā glāpitendīvara śrīr jayati parama jaitraḥ ko'pi rādhā kaṭākṣaḥ
tribhuvana jaya lakṣmīr varyayā datta dāmā madhuripur api yena krīḍayā nirjito'bhūt

(Lalita Mādhava, Act IV)

"All glories to Rādhā's supremely victorious sidelong glance, which with its sweetness makes the beauty of the most splendid of blue lotus flowers wilt, and which with its playfulness conquers even Madhu's enemy Kṛṣṇa, who was Himself garlanded by the goddess of victory victorious in the three worlds!"

The *sakhīs* and *mañjarīs* know everything. Seeing the beauty of Taralākṣī's eyes, they joke with Her as they were doing when She first fell in love with Kṛṣṇa: "Sakhi Rādhe! Who has stolen Your heart? Tell us the truth! You are not so eager anymore as before to read books or to teach Your parrots eloquent verses! We never hear You gossiping or joking with Your friends anymore! How beautifully You are now playing Your Vīṇā! Where has this all gone now?"[129]

gharera bāhire, daṇḍe śata bāre,
tile tile āiso yāo
mana ucāṭana, niḥśvāsa saghana,
kadamba kānane cāo
rāi! emon kene vā hoile
guru durujane, bhaya nāhi mone,
kothā vā ki deva pāile

[129] Quoted by Śrīla Ānanda Gopāla Gosvāmī from Ānanda Vṛndāvana Campūḥ (8.14) :
kva te'dhyayana kautukaṁ kva śuka-śārikā'dhyāpanā
kva barhi naṭanekṣaṇaṁ kva parivādinī vādanam
kva hāsa parihāsinī priya-sakhī-janaiḥ saṁkathām
kim āli vanamālinā tava mano maṇiś coritaḥ

sadāi cañcala, vasana añcala,
samvaraṇa nāhi koro
bosi thāki thāki, uṭhaho camaki,
bhūṣaṇa khasāyā poro
boyose kiśorī, rājāra kumārī,
tāhe kulavadhū bālā
ki vā abhilāṣe, bāḍhāle lālase,
nā bujhi tomāra chalā
tomāra carite, heno bujhi cite,
hāta bāḍāile cāṅde
caṇḍī dāsa bhaṇe, kori anumāne,
ṭhekile kāliyā phāṅde

"You're going in and out of Your house a hundred times in half an hour! Your mind is very agitated and You breathe deeply as You gaze at the Kadamba-forest! Rāi! How have You become like this? You're not even afraid of Your wicked superiors! Have You become possessed by a ghost or so? You don't stop the edge of Your *sārī* from constantly moving in a restless way (betraying Your own restless mood). You may sit down, but then You become startled and get up again, making Your ornaments fall off in the shock. You are an adolescent girl, a princess, and You are married as well. I don't understand which desire is increasing Your anxiety! When I study Your behaviour I think that You're stretching Your hand out to the moon (You're trying to achieve the impossible)!" Caṇḍī dāsa sings: "I think You have fallen into Kāliyā's (Kṛṣṇa's) trap!"

When the *sakhīs* see the beauty of Taralākṣī's restless eyes, they joke in so many ways, saying: "O *sakhi*! It seems as if Vanamālī (Kṛṣṇa, who wears a garland of forestflowers) has stolen the jewel of Your mind!" After Bhāvamayī Rādhikā and Her friends have relished the nectar of Kṛṣṇa's lips Tulasī brings drinking water scented with camphor and fresh roses, with which they can flush their mouths. Tulasī's pure love gives the water an extra flavour. The *mañjarīs* are love personified. What to speak of the *kiṅkarīs*, the whole of Vraja-*dhāma* is the kingdom of love, therefore Ṭhākura Bilvamaṅgala spoke to the Lord as follows:

gopālāṅgana kardameṣu viharan viprādhvare lajjase
bruṣe go-vṛṣa huṅkṛtai stuti śatair maunaṁ vidhatse satām
dāsyaṁ gokula puṁścaliṣu kuruṣe svāmyaṁ na dāntātmaṣu
jñātaṁ Kṛṣṇa tavāṅghri-paṅkaja-yugaṁ premaika labhyaṁ muhuḥ

"O Kṛṣṇa! Your lotus-feet can only be conquered with love! Otherwise, how could You blissfully roll around on the muddy courtyards of the cowherders, whereas You hesitate even to look for a moment at the pure and clean altars of the *brāhmaṇas*, how can You shout at the mooing cows and bulls of Vṛndāvana, running after them, while You remain silent towards the sages that pronounce Sāma Veda-*mantras* in the Tapovana, and how can You become the humble servant of the young girls of Gokula, praying to them to place their feet on Your head, whereas You remain deaf to the anxious prayers of the self-controlled saints who pray to You to become their master? O Kṛṣṇa! From all this I can understand that only the pure love of Vraja can capture Your lotus feet!"

After taking *prasāda* Śrīmatī and Her girlfriends get up to wash their hands and mouths. The *kiṅkarīs* have arranged for scented water for washing the hands, a *loṭā*, a stool, a spittoon, twigs for brushing the teeth and scented clay for washing the hands. Fortunate Tulasī can wash Svāminī's hands while another *kiṅkarī* pours the water.[130] The mental service of the

[130] This paragraph is narrated by Śrī Ānanda Gopāla Gosvāmī.

sādhaka-devotees will become very nice when they hear and chant the descriptions of these expert services of the *ācāryas*. The devotee should merge his own thoughts into the thoughts of the *ācāryas* when he meditates on his devotional service. When the transcendental vision vanishes Śrī Raghunātha dāsa prays as follows for devotional service:

taralākṣi śrī rādhike nivedana kori; bhṛṅgāra bhariyā dibo suvāsita vāri
bhojanānte jala pāne ānandita mana; karpūra vāsita jale koro ācamana
danta kāṣṭha kara-padme koribo arpaṇa; dantera śodhane kori punaḥ ācamane
paritṛpta hoiyā tumi bhojana vilāse; pāritoṣika dibe more bhukta avaśeṣe
koto mate sevā kori rahibo caraṇe; dāsa gosvāmī nivedaye ākula krandane

(Śrī Haripada Śila)

"O restless-eyed Śrī Rādhike! I pray to You: Let me fill up a jug with nicely scented water and blissfully make You drink this water after eating. Then I will help You to flush Your mouth with camphor-scented water, place a twig for brushing Your teeth in Your lotus-like hands and serve You mouth-water again. After enjoying Your pastimes of eating You will be very satisfied and give me a reward in the form of Your foodremnants. I will stay by Your lotus feet and serve You in so many ways. Dāsa Gosvāmī anxiously cries when he prays like this."

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VERSE 51:

BHOJANASYA SAMAYE TAVA YATNĀD
DEVI DHŪPA NIVAHĀN VARA GANDHĀN
VĪJANĀDYAM API TAT KṢAṆA YOGYAṀ
HĀ KADĀ PRAṆAYATAḤ PRAṆAYĀMI

bhojanasya - of the meal; *samaye* - at the time; *tava* - Your; *yatnāt* - carefully; *devi* - O Goddess!; *dhūpa* - incense; *nivahān* - much; *vara* - excellent; *gandhān* - fragrance; *vījana* - fanning; *adyam* - beginning with; *api* - even; *tat* - that; *kṣaṇa* - moment; *yogyaṁ* - suitable; *hā* - O!; *kadā* - when; *praṇayataḥ* - with love; *praṇayāmi* - I will do.

O Devi (goddess)! When can I, while You are eating, lovingly and attentively light a lot of nicely fragrant incense, fan You or render other services appropriate for that moment?

Explanations: The ocean of Śrī Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī's *prema* is stirred, and as a result he relishes the flavours of wonderful services and he anxiously laments. The course of love is very amazing!

bhakta premera yoto daśā ye gati prakāra; yoto sukha yoto duḥkha yoteko vikāra
Kṛṣṇa tāhā samyak nā pāre jānite; bhakta bhāva aṅgīkāre tāhā āsvādite
kṛṣṇere nācāya premā bhaktere nācāya; āpane nācaye - tine nāce eka ṭhāi

"All the loving phases of the devotee, his happiness, his distress, all the different transformations - even Kṛṣṇa cannot know them completely. That is why He accepted the mood of a devotee to relish them. Prema makes Kṛṣṇa dance, makes the devotees dance and dances itself - all three are dancing at one place!" (Caitanya Caritāmṛta Antya 18)

When Svāminī takes Her meal Tulasī very carefully offers Her the most exquisite incenses and fans Her according to the time of the year. In the summer this is more required than in the winter. In his visions Raghunātha personally experiences this, and when the visions vanish he anxiously prays. Without devotional service the pure devotee finds it hard to stay alive. Śrī Raghunātha dāsa wept as follows:

jano'yaṁ yācate duḥkhī rudann uccair idaṁ muhuḥ
tat padāmbhoja yugmaika gatiḥ kātaratāṁ gataḥ
kṛtvā nija gaṇasyāntaḥ kāruṇyān nija sevane
niyojayatu māṁ sākṣāt seyaṁ vṛndāvaneśvarī

(Śrī Viśākhānandada Stotram - 129,130)

"Although this person is cruel, deceitful and wicked, he still humbly bows down at Her lotus feet, considering them to be the only goal of his life, and he continuously weeps and begs: "May the Queen of Vṛndāvana be merciful to me and allow me in Her own party, engaging Me in Her direct service!" Eagerness is the very life of *rāga bhajana*: Śrīla Narottama Ṭhākura sings: *parama nāgara Kṛṣṇa, tā'he hao ati tṛṣṇa, bhajo tā're vraja-bhāva loiyā* "Kṛṣṇa is the greatest hero! Be very eager for Him and worship Him in the Vraja-mood!" When there is a desire to attain the Lord contempt will come for all things that are unfavorable to *bhajana.* When compassion is unfavorable to *bhajana,* then even that must be given up. Even if my *iṣṭa deva* speaks words that are unfavorable to *bhajana*, then I will not listen to it, taking it that He is just testing me. It is said that once Śrī Rādhārāṇī gave Her *prasādī tāmbūla* to one disciple of Śrīpāda Gopāla Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī on Harivāsara day (*ekādaśī*). While chewing these betelleaves he came to see Śrī Gurudeva, who then rejected his disciple for eating *pān* on *ekādaśī*. Śrī Rādhārāṇī then asked Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī - "Is the law of the Gosvāmī's books even higher than Her grace?" Śrīpāda replied to Śrī Rādhārāṇī's lotus feet that Her natural mercy can never come in violation of *sadācāra* (regulative principles). He had rejected his disciple, knowing for sure that some test (of Rādhārāṇī) was hidden in the event. Śrī Rādhārāṇī replied: "I understood that you have become qualified as a bona fide *ācārya*!" When *bhajana* is spoiled everything is spoiled. Śrīman Mahāprabhu said: *Kṛṣṇa prāptira upāya āra nāhi bhajana vine*: "There is no other way to attain Kṛṣṇa than *bhajana*!" Bhajana is the means and *bhajana* is the goal. Mahāprabhu Himself was always absorbed in the devotional item of 'hearing':

caṇḍī dāsa vidyāpati, rāyera nāṭaka gīti,
karṇāmṛta śrī gīta govinda.
svarūpa rāmānanda sane, mahāprabhu rātri dine
gāya śune parama ānanda

"Day and night Mahāprabhu was listening to songs of Caṇḍī dāsa and Rāmānanda Rāya's play and verses from Kṛṣṇa Karnāmṛta and Gīta Govinda, together with Svarūpa Dāmodara and Rāmānanda Rāya." (C.C.) The *ācāryas* are extraordinary knowers of *rasa*, and their association can be attained by studying their books, that contain everything they love. By hearing and discussing these books and becoming absorbed in the mood of the *ācāryas* the devotees can also become absorbed in these moods. Then we can say *mahad bhāve rasa hobe āsvādana* "Rasa can be relished when we have accepted the mood of the great saints."

In the previous verse Śrī Raghunātha dāsa had served Svāminī Her drinkingwater and Her mouthwater after She had finished relishing Kṛṣṇa's nectarean food-remnants with Her girlfriends, and now he sees himself offering incense to Her and fanning Her. His mind was so absorbed in Śrīmatī's relishing Kṛṣṇa's lip-nectar that he only became aware of his service of offering incense during Her meal after She had already washed Her mouth! He has rendered his service at the proper time, but because of his ecstatic love the succession of services experienced in transcendental visions was broken. Whenever Raghunātha perceives some devotional service he prays for it to Svāminī's lotus feet, therefore the succession of services is sometimes disturbed. In the same way Mahārāja Śrī Parīkṣit was sittting down hearing the Bhāgavata, waiting for death, while Śrī Śukadeva was showering him with nectar topics, which was also not always in proper sequence due to his (Śuka's) ecstatic love. Sometimes he first told the King a story which had historically occurred later, and then the earlier story. This shows the superexcellence of these topics. The self-manifest pastimes are here in control, and not the narrators! The celestial Ganges-stream of nectarean pastimes spontaneously flows from the tongues of their saintly narrators. Śrī Nārada told king Prācīnabarhi (Śrīmad Bhāgavata 4.29.41) -

tasmin mahā mukharitā madhubhic caritra pīyūṣa śeṣa saritaḥ paritaḥ sravanti
tā ye pibantyavitṛṣo nṛpa gāḍha karṇais tān na spṛśanty aśana tṛṅ bhaya śoka mohāḥ

"O King! A stream of the quintessence of nectar in the form of narrations of Śrī Kṛṣṇa's pastimes flows from the mouths of the great saints, and those who insatiably drink this nectar with their deeply absorbed ears will not be touched by feelings of hunger, thirst, fear, lamentation or delusion." Śrī Jīva Gosvāmī comments as follows on this verse: *tānotān mahat kīrtyamānāni bhagavad yaśāṁsi sva māhātmyena dūrīkṛtya sva sukham anubhāvayantīti* "The glories of the Lord that emanate from the mouths of the great souls are self-manifest and they remove all feelings of hunger, thirst, fear, lamentations and delusion, making the hearer experience his own bliss." The books of the *ācāryas* are like the twanging of the strings of their hearts, that are like stringed instruments. The devotee will tune his heart into the tune of those stringed instruments. Śrī Śuka Muni said: "The *gopikās* of Vraja asked Uddhava about Kṛṣṇa in private". *rahasya pṛcchat* (S.B. 10.47.3) Śrī Jīva Gosvāmī then asks *rahasi vijātīya bhāvo'gocare* "How can there be any question of confidential inquiry when there are millions of *gopīs* around? The same tune resounds on all their stringed instrument-like hearts. This place is inaccessible to those who have a different mood, therefore it is called a private, solitary place. On the strength of one-pointed devotion all other moods will subside and the devotee will get the same desires as the *ācāryas*. Rūpa and Rāghunātha dāsa are absorbed in their *bhajana:*

chāpānna daṇḍa rātri dine, rādhā-Kṛṣṇa guna gāne,
smaraṇete sadāi goyāya
cāri daṇḍa śuti thāke, svapne rādhā-Kṛṣṇa dekhe,
eka kāla vyartha nāhi yāya

"They sang Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa's glories 22 hours a day and always remembered Them. The remaining 2 hours they would sleep, but even then they dreamt of Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa. In this way they did not waste any time." Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī has listed all the different obstacles that may weaken the devotee's *bhajana: yataḥ kauṭilyam aśraddhā bhagavanniṣṭhā cyāvaka vastvantarābhiniveśo bhakti śaithilyaṁ sva bhaktādi kṛta mānitvam ity evam ādinī mahat saṅgādi lakṣaṇa bhaktyāpi nivartayituṁ duṣkarāṇi citta hi tasyāparādhasyaiva kāryāṇi tāny eva ca prācīnasya tasya liṅgāni* "Crookedness, faithlessness, becoming absorbed in things that have nothing to do with Kṛṣṇa and that cause one to fall down from the path of *bhajana,* weakness in *bhajana* and

pride of one's *bhajana.* When the devotee is unable to give up these shortcomings, despite the very powerful influence of association with the great saints and the process of devotional service itself, then it must be understood that offenses to the holy name and crookedness have found their place in the heart. If no offense was committed in the present life then they must have been committed in a previous birth." Therefore Śrī Narottama Ṭhākura sings: *sādhu mukhe kathāmṛta, śuniyā vimala cita, nāhi bhelo aparādha kāraṇa* "I could not purify my mind by listening to the nectarean discussions of the saints, because I have committed offenses." When the devotee becomes free from his offensive attitude by the mercy of the saints, he gets real taste and he cannot live without *bhajana* anymore. Then his *bhajana* swiftly reaches perfection: *ānanda kori hṛdoya, ripu kori parājaya, anāyāse govinda bhajibo* "All the enemies of lust and greed will be conquered, the heart will become blissful and I will easily worship Govinda." Full of love Śrī Raghunātha offers incense to Śrīmatī and fans Her, and when the vision vanishes he prays:

he devi śrī rādhike! koto ye lālasā; pūrṇa koro mad īśvarī karuṇā bharasā
bhojana samaye ati yatna sahakāre; dibo sugandhita dhūpa bhojana mandire
bhojana vilāsa āmi darśana koriyā; cāmara ḍhulābo kobe haraṣita hoiyā

(Śrī Haripada Śila)

"O Śrī Rādhike! O my mistress! Please fulfill my desires! Let me very carefully offer You fragrant incense when You are eating in Your diningroom. Let me blissfully look at You and fan You with a yaktail-fan while You are enjoying Your meal!"

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VERSE 52:

KARPŪRA PŪRA PARIPŪRITA NĀGAVALLĪ
PARṆĀDI PŪGA PARIKALPITA VĪṬIKĀṀ TE
VAKTRĀṂBUJE MADHURA GĀTRI MUDĀ KADĀHAṀ
PROTPHULLA ROMA NIKARAIḤ PARAM ARPAYĀMI

karpūra - camphor; *pūra* - by a flood; *paripūrita* - filled with; *nāgavallī*- betel; *parṇa* - leaf; *ādi* - and so; *pūga* - abundance; *parikalpita* - made; *vīṭikāṁ* - betelnuts; *te* - Your; *vaktra* - face; *ambuje* - in the lotus; *madhura* - sweet; *gātri* - body (fem.); *mudā* - blissful; *kadā* - when; *aham* - I; *protphulla* - blossoming; *roma* - skinpores; *nikaraiḥ* - with an abundance; *param* - great; *arpayāmi* - I will offer.

O Madhura Gātri (sweet-limbed girl)! When will my hair stand on end of ecstasy when I place a betelleaf with camphor, catechu, cloves and guvak into Your lotuslike mouth?

Explanations: In *svarūpāveśa* Śrī Raghunātha dāsa has a wonderful relish of devotional service. Just as a conditioned soul is in *māyā* while sleeping, dreaming and being awake the devotee is always absorbed in *bhajan*, while sleeping, dreaming and being awake. *bhajana* means keeping the mind fixed and attracted. The mind should be poured into the

Yugala Kiśora. *rādhā-Kṛṣṇa duhu pāya, tanu mana rahu tāya, āra dūre yāuk vāsanā* "Let my mind and body dwell in Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa's lotus feet, and let all my material desires go far away." Śrīpāda Līlāśuka, being attracted to Kṛṣṇa's sweetness, said:

mādhurya vāridhi madāmbu taraṅga bhaṅgī śṛṅgāra saṅkulita śīta kiśora veśam
āmanda hāsa lalitānana candra bimbam ānanda samplavam anuplavataṁ mano me

(Śrī Kṛṣṇa Karṇāmṛta)

"May my mind be immersed in the flood of bliss (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) that always increases the ocean of intoxicating sweetness and causes great waves in that ocean, whose cool adolescent dress is a collection of erotic ornaments and whose lovely moon-like face is beautified by a soft smile." How will the mind ever deviate after it was immersed in an ocean of *rasa*? Absorption in Svāminī's maidservice is even deeper! "I am a maidservant of She whose form, qualities and sweetness defeat even Govinda's! What can *māyā* do to me then?" When, by continuously performing *bhajan*, the mind becomes *rasika* then the devotee becomes as attached and accustomed to his beloved deity as a conditioned soul is to his wife and children. That's why the Gosvāmīs say: "We want *sāsaṅga bhajan* (worship with attachment to the deity). *anāsaṅga bhajana* (worship without attachment to Kṛṣṇa) won't do." "It is my duty to chant the holy name (a fixed number of times), that's why I do it, but I don't relish the sweetness of the name!" Mahāprabhu could not even pronounce the word Jagannātha when He was in ecstasy (while dancing in the Ratha Yātrā). *jaja gaga jaja gaga gadgada vacana* (C.C.) "He was saying '*jaja gaga jaja gaga*' with faltering voice." Then the Lord relished *pratipadam pūrṇāmṛtāsvādanam*, the full nectar at every step. Śrīla Dāsa Gosvāmī has said:

rādheti nāma nava sundara sīdhu mugdhaṁ kṛṣṇeti nāma madhurādbhuta gāḍha dugdham
sarva kṣaṇaṁ surabhi rāga himena ramyaṁ kṛtvā tad eva piba me rasane kṣudhārte

"O my tongue suffering from thirst! Please mix the delicious fresh enchanting nectar of the name Rādhā with the wonderfully sweet condensed milk of the name Kṛṣṇa, add the fragrant delightful ice of pure passionate love and drink this charming drink at every moment!" The *ācāryas* teach us that we must relish each item of devotion in this way. All other desires, from sense-gratification to liberation, are all cheating. As long as such cheating propensities are there there can be no pure devotion, let alone *rāga bhakti*! Śrī Līlāśuka has said:

bhaktis tvayi sthiratarā bhagavan yadi syād
daivena naḥ phalati divya kiśora mūrtiḥ
muktiḥ svayaṁ mukulitāñjali sevate'smān
dharmārtha kāma gatayaḥ samaya pratīkṣāḥ

"O Lord! When our devotion to You becomes firm and fixed we may be so fortunate to behold Your divine adolescent form. Liberation will personally serve us with folded hands and religiosity, economic development and sense-gratification will be waiting for the time to attend to us." (Kṛṣṇa Karṇāmṛta 107) A person in whose heart the splendor of Rādhārāṇī's toe-nails arises is fearless and undisturbed. Renunciation is there in the minds of those who are absorbed in these lotus feet. Everything is wasted for someone whose heart does not carry these lotus feet, but a devotee who accepts the mood of the *kiṅkarīs* will always experience the vicinity of these lotus feet. How blissful it is to even think "I am close to Her!".

Svāminī has received the nectar of Kṛṣṇa's lips. The jokes of Her *sakhīs* crystallize the sweetness of their savour. Tulasī seats Svāminī on a stool and washes Her mouth. Svāminī then holds court with Her *sakhīs* while a jewelled wick is burning. Tulasī then comes and stands before Svāminī, carrying a jewelled plate with a selfmade betelleaf containing cardamom,

ground catechu, nutmeg, areca-nuts, camphor and cloves. Svāminī is absorbed in talking about Śyāma with Her girlfriends. Tulasī attracts Her attention by calling Her Madhura Gātrī, sweet-limbed Girl. When is She Madhura Gātrī for the *kiṅkarīs*? When She is with Śyāma! Nothing is as sweet as that! Why is the betelleaf called *param*, or best? There's a secret in that! Tulasī has secretly mixed some of Śyāma's leftover *pān* in it, that she had discretely received from Dhaniṣṭhā when she was at Nandīśvara earlier in the evening. Dhaniṣṭhā knows what is on Svāminī's mind, therefore she has given these betelleaves to Tulasī. When Svāminī catches the fragrance of this *pān*, She becomes enchanted and possessed with greed.[131] The *pān* chewed by Madana Mohana is even sweeter than nectar and its scent increases the desire of Svāminī's tongue:

sudhājid ahi-vallikā sudala vīṭikā carvitah
sa me madana mohanaḥ sakhi! tanoti jihvā spṛhām

(Govinda Līlāmṛta 8.8)

"O *sakhi*! Madana Mohana increases the yearnings of My tongue with His nicely chewed betelleaves, that defeat the sweetness of nectar!"

Kṛṣṇa ye khāy tāmbūla, kohe tāra nāhi mūla,
tāhe āra dambha paripāṭī
tāra yebā udgāra, tāre koy amṛta sāra,
gopīra mukha kore ālabāṭi

(Caitanya Caritāmṛta Antya 16, 132)

"I cannot describe the value of the betelleaves that were chewed by Kṛṣṇa. They are also most proud of being called 'the essence of nectar' and being able to use the *gopīs*' mouths as spittoons!"

This *pān* is the greatest elixir. When Svāminī smells it She becomes overwhelmed. It is as if Śyāmasundara has appeared in Person. Looking at Svāminī, it seems as if She sits there with someone else, hugged against somebody (Kṛṣṇa). How sweet, how beautiful, how splendid! It is the *bhāva*-service of Bhāvamayī, by the *bhāva-kiṅkarī* in the kingdom of *bhāva*. Without *bhāva* this cannot be grasped. The great composer of the Rasa-*śāstras*, Maharṣi Bharata Muni, has written: *bhāvā evābhisampannāḥ prayānti rasa rūpatām* "When *bhāva* becomes mature it attains *rasa-rūpatā* (a form of *rasa*). Bhāva is understood to mean *manovṛtti*, or a mentality. There are two kinds of faculties of the mind: the manifest and the unmanifest. When the manifest thoughts dwell in the mind it is called *manovṛtti* and when the unmanifest thoughts are there it is called *saṁskāra, vāsanā, bhāva*, or *bhāvanā*. When this (devotional) *saṁskāra* takes a place in the heart by the grace of the saints all will be understood, experienced and relished. Tulasī attracts Svāminī's attention because now She is in the kingdom of *līlā*. Where has Her mind gone? The *sakhīs* know it and Svāminī speaks with them in that mood, that's why the word *vaktrāmbuja* is used here in the text. A speaker is called *vaktra*. Tulasī calls out *ayi madhura gātri*!, calling Svāminī back to reality and Svāminī, who is greedy after their fragrance, eagerly stretches out Her hand to grab the betelleaves from her jewelled plate. What a wonderful expertise in devotional service! "Svāminī has stopped speaking with Her *sakhīs* just to put my betelleaves in Her mouth!" As soon as Tulasī

[131] Explanation by Śrī Ānanda Gopāla Gosvāmī

offers the betelleaves she cannot see Svāminī's mouth anymore. The transcendental revelation disappears from Śrīla Raghunātha Dāsa and he laments out of great grief:[132]

he rādhe madhurāṅgi! navīnā kiśorī; romāñcita kalevare tomāra kiṅkarī
mukha padme kobe dibo karpūra tāmbūla; paricaryā koribo go samaya anukūla

"O sweet-formed Rādhe! O young adolescent girl! Your maidservant has goosepimples of ecstasy on her skin when she offers betelleaves with camphor to Your lotus mouth. When can I serve You in this way when the time is right?" (Śrī Haripada Śila)

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VERSE 53:

ĀRĀTRIKEṆA BHAVATĪṀ KIM U DEVI DEVĪṀ
NIRMAÑCHAYIṢYATITARĀṀ LALITĀ PRAMODĀT
ANYĀLAYAŚ CA NAVA MAṄGALA GĀNA PUṢPAIḤ
PRĀṆĀRBUDAIR API KACAIR API DĀSIKEYAM

ārātrikena - with the *ārati*-ceremony; *bhavatīṁ* - Your; *kim u* - whether; *devi devīṁ* - O Goddess!; *nirmañchayiṣyatitarāṁ* - will worship; *lalitā* - Lalitā; *pramodāt* - out of joy; *anya* - other; *ālayaḥ* - *gopīs; ca* - and; *nava* - new; *maṅgala* - auspicious; *gāna* - songs; *puṣpaiḥ* - with flowers; *prāṇa* - life; *arbudaiḥ* - with billions; *api* - even; *kacaiḥ* - with hairs; *api* - even; *dāsikā* - maidservant; *iyam* - this.

O Devi (goddess)! While Lalitā joyfully performs the ārati-ceremony to You, and the other sakhīs worship You with new, auspicious songs and flowers, can this maidservant, to whom You are dearer than billions of lives, worship You with her hair?

Explanations: Śrī Raghunātha dāsa is deeply absorbed in his *svarūpāveśa*. In the way he experiences things in his *smaraṇa*, dreams, or visions he reveals his desires for attaining devotional service. After taking Her meal Svāminī holds court with Her *sakhīs*, sitting on a beautiful raised jewelled seat, enjoying a *pān*. Now Lalitā, the leader of the *sakhīs*, will perform Her *ārati* with lamps, incense and so on. The maidservants bring all the paraphernalia. One wave of devotional service after the other is coming over them. No one knows how to serve Rādhā so expertly as Her maidservants. Without full surrender one cannot perceive this devotional service to Rādhārāṇī. Śrīpāda Prabodhānanda Sarasvatī has written:

rādhā nāma sudhā-rasaṁ rasayituṁ jihvās tu me vihvalā
pādau tat padakāṅkitāsu caratāṁ vṛndāṭavī vīthiṣu
tat karmaiva karaḥ karotu hṛdayaṁ tasyāḥ padaṁ dhyāya tāt
tad bhāvotsavataḥ paraṁ bhavatu me tat prāṇanāthe ratiḥ

[132] Explanation by Śrī Ānanda Gopāla Gosvāmī.

"May my tongue become overwhelmed by relishing the nectarean flavour of Rādhā's holy name, may my feet walk over Vṛndāvana's pathways that are marked with Her footprints, may my hands be engaged only in Her menial service, may my heart meditate on Her lotus feet, and may I develop love for the Lord of Her life (Kṛṣṇa) through Her festival of emotions". (Rādhā Rasa Sudhānidhi 142) The *ācāryas* have expertly shown in their books how to surrender to Śrī Rādhārāṇī's lotus feet. It will all be experienced by the grace of Rūpa and Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī. Svāminī is sitting on Her *ratna paryaṅka* (jewelled throne). How should we think of Śrī Rādhikā's throne? *nijāṅga saurabhāloye garva paryaṅka; tā'te bosi āche sadā cinte Kṛṣṇa saṅga* (C.C. Madhya 8,175) "Śrī Rādhikā's bed of pride stands in the abode of Her nice bodily fragrance. She sits on that bed, always thinking of Kṛṣṇa's company". The birthplace of that pride is the feeling of possessiveness that causes Her to think: "Kṛṣṇa is mine!" The devotees should relish that sweetness in their meditations. When the *sādhaka* wants to make his life blessed by performing *smaraṇa* so naturally that it resembles a stream of water, he should certainly study and discuss the Stavamālā and Stavāvalī-compilations. Then he will taste *rasa* and experience all these heart's services. The mind cannot be absorbed in Svāminī's lotus feet by force. Without always perceiving the *siddha svarūpa* this cannot be understood, nor can one think of Rādhārāṇī's devotional service as long as one identifies with one's male or female material body. One must stay immersed in identification with the Śrī Guru-given *mañjarī svarūpa.* This desire must always be awake:

hari hari! āra ki emon daśā hobo
kobe vṛṣabhānu pure, āhīrī gopera ghare,
tanayā hoiyā janamibo

"Hari! Hari! When will I attain this condition? When will I be born as a daughter in the house of a cowherd in Vṛṣabhānu's town (Varṣānā)?"

yāvaṭe āmāra kobe, e pāṇi grahana hobe,
vasati koribo kobe tāya
sakhīra parama śreṣṭha, ye hoy tāhāra preṣṭha,
sevana koribo tāra pāya

"When will I be married in the village of Yāvat and when can I live there? When can I serve the best of *sakhīs* with everything that is most dear to Her?"

teṅho kṛpāvān hoiyā, rātula caraṇe loiyā,
āmāre koribe samarpaṇa
saphala hoibe daśā, pūribe manera āśā,
sevi duhāra yugala caraṇa

(Prārthanā)

"She will be merciful and take me to her reddish lotus feet, offering me to the lotus feet of the Yugala Kiśora. My condition will become successful and my desires will be fulfilled when I can serve these lotus feet!" It is not easy to become free from the bondage of the material body. As long as we think "I'm a scholar", "I'm a *gosvāmī*", "I'm a *bhajanānandī*" it cannot be accomplished. Without mercy from above this pride cannot leave. Intense worship can attract that grace, but if there is no eagerness joined to that *bhajana* it will also not work. Just as a child is born from the meeting of a married couple the Lord will appear after the meeting of devotional love and eagerness has taken place. The Lord Himself will reveal how worship can be performed with eagerness. *dadāmi buddhi-yogaṁ taṁ yena mām upayānti te*

(Gītā 10.10). How eager are Rūpa and Raghunātha! Are there any words to express it? Allegiance to their mood will surely bring experience. Śrīla Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī now does not see Rādhākuṇḍa anymore, he sees Śrī Rādhikā chewing *pān* on Her jewelled sofa in Yāvata. How sweetly She's sitting there, chewing *pān* and floating in the nectar of laughter and joking with Her girlfriends! Now there will be *ārati*. In the summer *ārati* is done with a plain lamp, in the winter with a jewelled lamp.[133] The '*ārātrika*', or *ārati*-ceremony is meant to remove obstacles or inauspiciousness. >>In the sweet *rasa* of Vraja there are so many obstacles for Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa in Their extra-marital relationship. In Govinda Līlāmṛta (8.18) Śrī Rādhikā personally explains what kind of obstacles She has to face:

nanandā vidveṣṭrī patir ati kaṭuḥ sāpi kuṭilā
dhavāmba me padmā prabhṛti ripu-pakṣaś ca balavān
vanaṁ vyāptaṁ sarvaṁ vraja dhana janair ahni sakhibhir
vṛtaḥ kṛṣṇo labhyaḥ katham iha bhaved vighna bahule

"My sister-in-law envies Me, My husband is very harsh and My mother-in-law is very crooked. The enemies' party, with *gopīs* like Padmā, is very strong, and Kṛṣṇa is out there somewhere in the fields at daytime, always surrounded by His cows and His friends! How then will I meet Kṛṣṇa when there are so many obstacles?" *ārātrika* is performed for a smooth meeting with Kṛṣṇa later, at nightfall, by Govinda Sthalī or other places in Vṛndāvana, after which Śrī Rādhikā can enjoy Herself with Him by dancing the Rāsa, playing in the water of the Yamunā, drinking honeywine and wandering in the forest with Him. For such an auspicious accomplishment this *ārātrika* is performed. Lalitā will perform this loving ceremony. Her bodily complexion is like Gorocana-pigment, she's a little older in age, and has a very harsh (loving) nature. She orders different people around while Tulasī brings the *ārati*-paraphernalia. Svāminī sits down like a steady lightningstreak, that's why She is addressed in the verse as Devi. *devī kohe dyotamanā paramā sundarī* (C.C.) Devī means effulgent and most beautiful. A wonderful golden light emanates from Her body. She feels that Śyāma is close to Her. He plays in Her heart. In *bhāvollāsa* (times of meeting, Ed.) She is *krīḍā vasatī nagarī* (C.C.), living in the town of play. How many past sports Svāminī remembers during the *ārati*, like pictures arising in Her mind! In the same way Lalitā performs the *ārati* of the Divine Pair together in the *kuñja*, in the presence of the *sakhīs* and *mañjarīs*! How beautiful! How sweet this is! The boat of Svāminī's mind sinks in the river of remembrance of Kṛṣṇa and that can be seen by the soft sweet smile on Her lotuslike face. How does She laugh? The Bhāgavata says *hasatyatho roditi rauti gāyaty unmādavan nṛtyati loka bāhyaḥ* "He laughs, cries, sings and dances like mad, ignoring the people!" That is the condition of someone who has *prema*. What then to say of the condition of *mahā-bhāvamayī* Rādhā?

During the ceremony there are no bells ringing. With sweet voices the *sakhīs* sing new auspicious songs to burn up all inauspiciousness, while Lalitā lovingly swings the lamp around before Svāminī. This *ārati* is a great ceremony of divine love. The light of the lamp even increases the effulgence of Śrī Rādhikā's face, that mocks the lustre of molten gold. All the *sakhīs* and *mañjarīs* sing and dance, spinning around and around. Lalitā blows a conchshell and some *kiṅkarīs* shower their beloved Svāminī with flowers. Some sing 'Jaya Jaya' and others make the *ulu-dhvani* (a high sound made while moving the tongue in the mouth). How brightly Svāminī shimmers during the *ārati*! She certainly deserves the name *devi*! Lalitā offers a conchshell with water and then she wipes away all kinds of misfortune with a handkerchief. Lalitā is the embodiment of love, and with all her love she performs this ceremony. The *sādhaka* will relish these pastimes in his meditations; it is very sweet. *smaraṇa manera prāṇa, madhura madhura dhāma* (Prema Bhakti Candrikā.) "*smaraṇa* is the life of the mind and the

[133] So far the explanation is by Śrī Ānanda Gopāla Gosvāmī.

abode of all sweetness." In the end Tulasī, who stands in the back, worships Svāminī with billions of hearts, by opening her braid, taking her hair in the hand before her bosom and waving it around as an offering to Svāminī. The hair is black, Kṛṣṇa is also black. What a wonderful way to remind Svāminī of Kṛṣṇa! Svāminī sits alone on Her sofa, but over the pathways of their minds (*smṛti-pathe*) the maidservants bring Her Śyāma there also, to sit on Her right side. After *ārati* there are singing-lessons and examinations in singing and dancing in the assembly of *sakhīs.* There's no limit to the ecstasy![134] Suddenly the transcendental vision of Śrī Raghunātha breaks and he weeps and prays:

śrī Kṛṣṇa preyasī tumi he devi rādhike!
ānande lalitā sakhī, hoiyā praphulla mukhī
nirmañchana koribe tomāke

"O Devi Rādhike, You are Śrī Kṛṣṇa's dearmost beloved! Lalitā-*sakhī*'s face will bloom of ecstasy when she offers You worship!"

sugandhi pradīpa jvāli, apara sakala āli,
mahānande ho'ye eka prāṇa.
puṣpāñjali diyā yabe, ārati koribe sabe,
gāhibe maṅgala stuti-gāna.

"As the fragrant incense burns all the other *sakhīs*, who are one life out of mutual love, blissfully offer You *ārati* by throwing flowers at You and singing auspicious songs."

e dāsīra abhilāṣa, hāte loiyā keśa-pāśa,
ārati koribo koṭi prāṇe
tuyā priya ei sevā, kobe vā āmāre dibā,
kichu nāhi bhāya ihā vine

(Śrī Rasika-Candra dāsa)

"This maidservant desires to hold her braided hair in her hands and thus perform *ārati* with millions of life-airs. When will You give me that beloved service? I don't want anything else but that!"

.

VERSE 54:

ĀLĪKULENA LALITĀ PRAMUKHENA SĀRDHAM
ĀTANVATĪ TVAM IHA NIRBHARA NARMA GOṢṬHĪM
MAT PĀṆI KALPITA MANOHARA KELI-TALPAM
ĀBHŪṢAYIṢYASI KADĀ SVAPANENA DEVI

ālī-kulena - by girlfriends; *lalitā* - Lalitā; *pramukhena* - headed by; *sārdham* - with; *ātanvatī*- manifesting; *tvam* - You; *iha* - here; *nirbhara* - great; *narma* - intimate; *goṣṭhīm* - discusion; *mat* - my;

[134] The explanations of the last two paragraphs are by Śrī Ānanda Gopāla Gosvāmī.

pāṇi - hand; *kalpita* - made; *manohara* - beautiful; *keli* - play; *talpam* - bed; *ābhūṣayiṣyasi* - You will decorate; *kadā* - when; *svapanena* - by dreaming; *devi* - O Goddess!

O Devi (goddess)! While You are absorbed in an intimate joking discussion with Your girlfriends, headed by Lalitā, I will make a beautiful playbed for You with my own hands. When will You decorate that bed by dreaming on it?

Explanations: Clear visions, dreams or *smaraṇa* are the life-support for the practitioners of *kiṅkarī-bhāva*, and if this does not take place they will become attracted to the material world. "Until now a person like me has not become acquainted with his beloved deity. My mind is still absorbed in so many paltry things. I cannot put aside even a penny for the Lord, but for one penny I can give up the Lord!" We must make advancement by making the world alien to us and taking the Lord into the heart. The Lord is so thirsty for devotion that as soon as He smells any He comes running to drink it. The soul is by nature the abode of causeless love of God, and the Lord is the Self of Selves, the Soul of souls. How dear He is to us! Lord Brahmā prayed to Kṛṣṇa in the Bhāgavata (10.14.36):

tāvad rāgādaya stenās tāvat kārāgṛhaṁ gṛham
tāvan moho'ṅghri nigaḍo yāvat Kṛṣṇa na te janaḥ

"O Kṛṣṇa! As long as the people do not turn to You, their attachments will act like thieves on them, their houses will remain prisons for them, and their illusion will remain their shackles!" The Vaiṣṇava Toṣaṇī comments as follows on this verse: *tatra nirupādhi premāspadasyātmano'py ātmatvena tvam eva rāgasya svābhāvika parama yogyāśrayaḥ. atas tal lakṣaṇa nija svāminam anupalabhyaiva bhramann asau janānām śubha vāsanā rūpāṁ tvad bhajana sāmagrīṁ haraṁś caura eva. tatas tad anuvartino'pi tādṛśāḥ.* "You are the natural abode of everyone's causeless love, because You are the Self of selves. Therefore You are the best shelter for everyone's love. It is natural to love one's beloved object or person. When the living entities don't get attached to You as their master their attachments will act like thieves that steal the paraphernalia of their worship from them, and greed and delusion will follow." The practising devotee devotees should lament: "Alas! Such a wonderful thing I have forgotten to become mad after temporary, bodily affairs!"

Śrī Raghunātha dāsa is the embodiment of love-in-separation. He has nobody in this world but Svāminī: *ati kadana samudre majjato hā kṛpārdre kṣaṇam api mama rādhe! netram ānandaya tvam* "O merciful Rādhe! I'm drowning in an ocean of misery! Please show Yourself just once and thus delight my eyes!" The practising devotee should also have some of this eagerness. "O Svāmini! I will not mix with this world! I will become as Svāminī wants me to be; then She will accept me!" The *ārati* is over now. Svāminī is surrounded by Her girlfriends, sitting on a jewel-studded sofa. She makes jokes with Her girlfriends, but these are not ordinary jokes: *nirbhara narma goṣṭhīm*. It is a very funny conversation. While Śrīmatī is absorbed in such a joking discussion Śyāmalā-sakhī comes before Her with a new *sakhī*. Seeing her, Śrīmatī asks: "Sakhi Śyāmale! Come, come! Who is that girl with you?" Śyāmalā says: "This is my friend Navīnā-*sakhī*! She hasn't met You yet, but She's very eager to meet You!" Svāminī is enchanted when She sees Navīnā-*sakhī* and stares at her in astonishment, saying: "Aha! You are so beautiful! If you are Śyāmalā's friend, then you're also My friend! What's your name and where do you live?" Navīnā *sakhī* says: "My name is Navīnā and I've come here with my

friend Śyāmalā to see You! From Śyāmalā I have heard about Your matchless form and attributes, so I became very eager to meet You!" Svāminī's heart melts when She hears Navīnā's nice voice and She says: "Do you know how to sing, dance and play musical instruments?" Navīnā says: "A little bit!" Svāminī takes Navīnā close to Herself while She exclaims: "Aha! How beautiful your face is! How sweet is your smile and how sweet are your words! Come here, come here! It is just like I've seen you somewhere before!" Then Navīnā-*sakhī* begins to dance and sing. Aha! How wonderful is her dance! How sweetly she sings and how nicely she moves her eyes and hands! The *sakhīs* faint of ecstasy when they see it. Again and again Svāminī says: "Bravo! Well done!" and gives Navīnā a tight hug. But while She embraces Navīnā She feels a familiar shivering over Her own body and that makes Her doubt. Who is this? Svāminī then pulls the veil from Navīnā's head and exclaims: "O mā! What is this? This is Kṛṣṇa! Śyāmale! You are so naughty!" Śyāma and the *sakhīs* have so much fun then! The *sakhīs* roll against Each other of laughter. What a wonderful fun they have! After Śyāma has gone home Tulasī prepares a bed for Svāminī to lie on. Although all kinds of funny discussions are going on Tulasī does not forget her service. Devotion consists of service. *bhaj ityeṣa vai dhātuḥ sevāyāṁ parikīrtitaḥ*. Devotional service is relishable in all three stages - *sādhana bhakti*, *bhāva bhakti*, and *prema bhakti*. Compared to that savour everything in this world is tasteless, including sense-gratification (*bhukti*) and liberation (*mukti*). There will be nothing left to want and to get from the material world. 'I just want to fall at Your lotus feet, stay with them and serve them.' The *kiṅkarīs* are the embodiments of the flavours of devotional service.[135] Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Lord Himself, but still He wants something from these maidservants. The Lord of the universe stretches His hand out to them. There is nothing as glorious and fortunate as this! Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī said (in Cāṭu Puṣpāñjali, 23):

karuṇāṁ muhur arthaye paraṁ tava vṛndāvana cakravartini
api keśī-ripor yathā bhavet sa caṭu prārthana-bhājanaṁ janaḥ

"O Queen of Vṛndāvana, Śrī Rādhe! I pray for Your mercy again and again, so that even Kṛṣṇa, the heroic destroyer of the Keśī-demon, will make me the object of His flattering prayers!" As long as there's still a whiff of personal desire Rādhā's service cannot be attained. The maidservants of Śrī Rādhā don't even dream of their own purposes! They are the embodiments of the flavour of devotional service, and they always immerse Svāminī and Śyāma in that flavour. The *mañjarīs* always throw Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa in ever-new pools of transcendental fun. One day the Yugala Kiśora sits down in a *kuñja*, with Their backs against Each other. They are angry with Each other and They both think: 'I will not be the first One to speak!' They don't want to disgrace Themselves by apologising, but at the same time They are suffering because They cannot meet Each other. Suddenly Rūpa Mañjarī breaks the impasse by telling Śyāma: "What are You telling me by blinking at me? I cannot woo Svāminī for You!" Both think: "The job is done!", and They begin to laugh and joke with Each other again. How wonderful is this *mañjarī*-service! She thinks: 'For Your pleasure we can do anything!"

parasparam apaśyatoḥ praṇaya māninor vāṁ kadā
dhṛtotkalikayor api svam abhirakṣator āgraham
dvayoḥ smitam udañcaye nudasi kiṁ mukundāmunā
dṛganta naṭanena mām uparametyalīkoktibhiḥ

(Utkalikā Vallari 63, Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī)

135 Narrated by Śrī Ānanda Gopāla Gosvāmī.

The scriptures are calling the beloved deity Adhokṣaja or He who is not perceived with the senses. How can devotion reach perfection then? After all, devotion is defined as service to the Lord with the senses. *hṛśīkeṇa hṛśīkeśa sevanam bhaktir ucyate* (Nārada Pañcarātra). The answer is: He is grasped by senses that are steeped in devotion. *bhaktir evainaṁ nayati bhaktir evainaṁ darśayati bhakti vaśaḥ puruṣaḥ bhaktir eva bhūyasī* (Upaniṣads) "Devotion alone captures Him, devotion alone reveals Him. The Lord is only controlled by devotion and devotion alone." *parāmṛśyaṁ dūre pathi pathi munīnāṁ vrajavadhū dṛśā dṛśyaṁ* (Kṛṣṇa Karṇāmṛta) "Adhokṣaja Kṛṣṇa is to be considered from a distance along the away shown by the sages (through ardent practices of meditation), but He's always visible to the Vraja-*gopīs*." In other words, when the Vraja-*gopīs* see Kṛṣṇa's sweet form they fall in love with Him and they can attain His sweet association. With this desire they wander around on the banks of the Yamunā on the pretext of getting water for their households. That is the power of loyal devotional service. There's no comparison to the loyalty of Rādhā's maidservants. The footservice of Rādhārāṇī is everything to them. "How can I show my face to Svāminī while being absorbed in such strong bodily consciousness? I'm ashamed to offer my contaminated life to Her! I am serving, and if my *sevya* is happy I will feel successful. Am I doing any *bhajan* if I don't smell Her bodily fragrance, see Her bodily luster or taste Her food-remnants even slightly?"

Tulasī now comes up to Svāminī. It is time for Svāminī to take a little rest, she thinks. Although the *sakhīs* are oblivious in their intimate discussion with Svāminī, Tulasī never forgets her service. She made a bed as white as the foam on milk for Svāminī to lie on. Going up to Svāminī, she says "Hey Śyāmājū! So much time has passed now, come and take a little rest! Let's go!" How much love this maidservant has! The *sakhīs* admit: "We don't love Rādhikā as much as Tulasī does! We've completely forgotten! Go *sakhi*, it's time for You to rest a little bit! Go!" Tulasī takes Svāminī by the hand, takes Her to the bed and makes Her lie down on it. A blue oillamp burns there to soothe Svāminī's eyes with the remembrance of Her lover. Svāminī is very happy to lie down on the bed prepared for Her by Tulasī. The text mentions the word *keli talpa*, or 'bed for loveplay'. But such a bed is only there in the *kuñja*, isn't it? How can there be such a playbed in Śrīmatī's in-laws' house? Because She sees Śyāmasundara coming to Her in Her dreams. This is called *svapna vilāsa*, or loveplay in a dream. *svapanena - na tu nidrayā.* The verse mentions *ābhūṣayiṣyasi ....svapanena*: You adorn this bed by dreaming on it, not by sleeping on it! Svāminī is enchanted by dreaming of Śyāma's form, that is like an ocean of *rasa*, His face, that shines like the moon and His neck that is adorned by a garland of jasmine-flowers! *rūpe gune rasa sindhu, mukha chaṭā jini indu, mālatīra mālā gale dole*– How wonderfully She moves in Her sleep while She dreams of enjoying with Kṛṣṇa! How sweetly She moves Her feet and how sweet is the smile on Her face! How much She speaks in Her dream! Śyāma cannot leave Svāminī under any circumstance, being attracted to Her love for Him. Later at night, when They meet in Vṛndāvana, Kṛṣṇa asks Svāminī: "Did You dream of Me this evening? I also dreamt of You!" Blessed is our Svāminī, blessed is our Śyāma!

Tulasī sees that Svāminī decorates Her bed by stretching Herself out on it. It is as if Her sweetness drips from the bed and inundates Tulasī with a stream of *rasa*. Suddenly the vision ends and Śrī Raghunātha falls on the bank of Rādhākuṇḍa and anxiously prays:[136]

lalitādi sakhī sane, priya narma ālāpane,
yabe tumi hoibe magana.
keli vilāsera tare, vichāibo nija kare
manohara kusuma śayana

[136] Narrated by Śrī Ānanda Gopāla Gosvāmī.

"When You are absorbed in a joking conversation with Lalitā and Your other girlfriends, I will make a playbed for You with my own hands, an enchanting bed of flowers!"

tāhāte śayana kori, svapane śyāmera heri,
priya saṅge hobe vilasita.
tomāra aṅga mādhurī, heribo nayana bhari,
keli talpe hoibe bhūṣita

(Śrīla Rasika-Candra Dāsa)

"When You lie down on it You see Śyāma in Your dream and enjoy with Your beloved. I will fill up my eyes with the sweetness of Your body, that decorates this playbed."

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VERSE 55:

SAMVĀHAYIṢYATI PADAU TAVA KIṄKARĪYAṀ
HĀ RŪPA MAÑJARIR ASAU CA KARĀMBUJE DVE
YASMIN MANOJÑA HṚDAYE SADAYE'NAYO KIṀ
ŚRĪMĀN BHAVIṢYATITARĀṀ ŚUBHA VĀSARAḤ SAḤ

samvāhayiṣyati - will massage; *padau* - both feet; *tava* - Your; *kiṅkarī* - maidservant; *iyaṁ* - this; *hā* - O!; *rūpa mañjari* - Rūpa Mañjarī; *asau* - that; *ca* - and; *kara* - hand; *ambuje* - in both lotuses (fem.); *dve* - two (fem.); *yasmin* - in which; *manojña* - beautiful; *hṛdaye* - O heart (fem.)!; *sadaye* - O merciful girl; *anayaḥ* - of them both; *kiṁ* - whether; *śrīmān* - beautiful; *bhaviṣyatitarāṁ* - will be; *śubha* - auspicious; *vāsaraḥ* - day; *saḥ* - he.

O Manojña Hṛdaye (girl with a beautiful heart) O Sadaye (merciful girl)! Will that beautiful, blessed day come when this maidservant of Yours will massage Your feet and Śrī Rūpa Mañjarī takes care of Your hands?

Explanations: Śrī Raghunātha dāsa is agitated by feelings of love-in-separation. He is deeply absorbed in his *svarūpāveśa* and he has no other aim than Svāminījī's lotus feet. In 'Vraja Vilāsa Stava' he says: *yan mādhurī divya sudhā rasābdheḥ smṛte kaṇenāpyati lolitātma*: 'My heart is very agitated by remembering even a drop of the sweet, divine nectar-ocean that is the Yugala Kiśora'. The *ācāryas* are our example. Our lives should be completely in allegiance to them. It is the nature of greed that it will not let a person in peace until he has gotten the object of his desire. This means that when we think of something for a moment and the mind is drawn to something else the next moment we cannot really speak of genuine greed. When the practising devotee performs *bhajan* in allegiance to the *ācāryas* a tiny drop of their vast devotional greed may become infused in his heart. How sweet are the activities of Śrīman Mahāprabhu's associates! Whether they were householders or renunciants, they were all free

from attachment to sense-gratification. Their auspicious descension into the material world was meant for distributing tangible devotional experiences and detachment from sense-gratification. Every mouthful of food causes nourishment, satisfaction and cessation of hunger. 'In bodily consciousness I cannot understand that I am Rādhā's maidservant. I just like to be connected with *māyā*!'[137] Śrī Narottama Ṭhākura sings:

dehe boise ripu-gaṇa, yoteko indriya-gaṇa,
keho kāro bādhya nāhi hoy
śunile nā śune kāna, jānile nā jāne prāṇa,
dāḍāite nā pāre niścoy

(Prema Bhakti Candrikā)

"The senses that dwell in our bodies are so many enemies. Nobody obeys anyone. My ears hear, but don't listen and my heart knows, but does not realize. They cannot become determined and fixed." "I'm chewing the thorns of sense-gratification like a camel who cuts his mouth and tongue by chewing thorns, instead of eating the mango-pits of devotion, like the cuckoo. I'm burning to death in the fire of *māyā*, but still I will not relish the nectar of devotion."

viṣaya garala-maya, tā'te māna sukhacaya,
sei sukha duḥkha kori māno
govinda viṣaya rasa, saṅga koro tāra dāsa,
prema bhakti satya kori jāno

"I consider the poison of sense-gratification to be happiness, although I should know it to be miserable. Taste the nectar of the Govinda-subject, and associate with His devotees. Know loving devotion to be real!" Govinda's service is bliss and a lack of His service is misery. *sakhīgaṇa cāri pāśe, sevā kori abhilāṣe, se sevā parama sukha dhare* (ibid) "I desire service, being surrounded by the *sakhīs*. That service contains the greatest bliss." When you love God the divine remnants of that love will be scattered throughout the universe. Then you can experience universal love as it is. Then the spiritual world is sweet, the material world is sweet, and sweet Kṛṣṇa is even more sweet. Sweetness will be pervading inside out.

Svāminī lies to rest on an excellent bed, covered with a bluish sheet. This sheet is very dear to Her simply because it is black (and reminds Her of Śyāma). She dreams of Śyāma and His sweetness makes Her happy inside and outside. Rūpa Mañjarī and Tulasī can both admire Her charming beauty and serve Her limbs at that time. How wonderful is their love for Svāminī! Rūpa and Tulasī's friendship is similar in this material world, where they are known as Rūpa Gosvāmī and Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī. Śrīla Raghunātha Dāsa introduces himself as follows by writing in the end of his Viśākhānandada-stotram:

śrīmad rūpa padāmbhoja dhūlī mātraika sevinā
kenacid grathitā padyair mālāghreyā tad āśrayaiḥ

"This garland of verses was strung by someone who subsists simply on serving the dust from Śrīmad Rūpa Gosvāmī's lotus feet. May the devotees who take shelter of him accept the fragrance of this garland!" It is described in 'Bhakti Ratnākara' that after reading Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī's play 'Lalita Mādhava', which describes Śrī Rādhikā's feelings of separation from Kṛṣṇa, Śrīla Raghunātha Dāsa almost died of transcendental agony. Just to save his life Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī gave him his 'Dāna Keli Kaumudī' to read, a one-act play which deals with the

[137] Explanation by Śrī Ānanda Gopāla Gosvāmī.

blissful meeting of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa. This inspired Raghunātha Dāsa to write his jewellike one-act play named 'Dāna Keli Cintāmaṇi'. Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī has also written a dedication to Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī at the conclusion of his 'Dāna Keli Kaumudī':

rādhākuṇḍa taṭī kuṭīra vasatis tyaktānya karma janaḥ
sevām eva samakṣam atra yuvayor yaḥ kartum utkaṇṭhate
vṛndāraṇya samṛddhi dohada pada krīḍā kaṭākṣa dyute
tarṣākhyā tarur asya mādhava phalī tūrṇam vidheyas tvayā

"O Mādhava! My friend (Raghunātha Dāsa) has given up all other activities and is now living in a cottage on the bank of Rādhākuṇḍa, very anxious to exclusively serve You and Śrī Rādhikā. You always cast Your merciful glance on those who live in Vṛndāvana and You fulfill all their desires, so please quickly make the tree of his (Raghunātha's) aspirations bear fruit!" These are some examples of their very intimate friendship.

Tulasī and Rūpa both climb on the bed to serve their Svāminī. They are not at all shy! Their servant mood is mixed with a mood of friendship for Svāminī. Tulasī calls Svāminī Manojña Hṛdayā, girl with a beautiful heart. Literally the word *manojña* means knowing (*jña*) the mind (*manaḥ*). *manaḥ jānātīti manojña.* Śrīmatī knows what is on Rūpa and Tulasī's mind, so She gives them this service. Manojña also means 'beautiful One'. Her endless beauty illuminates the house, the bed and the hearts of the *kiṅkarīs*! Her lustre has turned Śyāmasundara golden (making Him become Gaurasundara, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu). She is the quintessence of *mahā-bhāva* personified. All the poetic analogies about Śrīmatī Rādhikā's beauty - Her face defeating the moon in beauty, Her eyes defeating the lotus flowers and Her nose defeating the sesame-flowers - are ultimately futile.[138] Only by Her mercy in the form of ecstatic love She can be seen and felt in a heart illuminated by *viśuddha sattva* (pure goodness). Whatever falls into an ocean of nectar becomes nectarean, similarly the garments, ornaments and unguents of Śrī Rādhikā, who is the personification of *mahā bhāva*, are also filled with *mahā bhāva*. The Mahājanas relish this and we taste their remnants. Śrīla Kṛṣṇa dāsa Kavirāja Gosvāmī has written:

rādhā prati Kṛṣṇa sneha sugandhī udvartana; tā'te ati sugandhi deha ujjvala varaṇa
kāruṇyāmṛta dhārāya snāna prathama; tāruṇyāmṛta dhārāya snāna madhyama
lāvanyāmṛta dhārāya tad upari snāna; nija lajjā śyāma paṭṭa śāṭī paridhāna
Kṛṣṇa anurāga dvitīya aruṇa vasana; praṇaya māna kañculikāya vakṣaḥ ācchādana
saundarya- kuṅkuma, sakhī-praṇaya- candana; smita kānti karpūra- tine aṅga vilepana
kṛṣṇera ujjvala rasa mṛgamada bhara; sei mṛgamade vicitrita kalevare
prachanna māna vāmya dhammilla vinyāsa; dhīrādhīrātmaka guṇa aṅga paṭṭavāsa
rāga tāmbūla-rāga adhara ujjvala; prema kauṭilya netra yugale kajjala
sudīpta sāttvika bhāva harṣādi sañcāri; ei sab bhāva bhūṣaṇa sab aṅge bhari
kila kiñcitādi bhāva vimśati bhūṣita; guṇa śreṇī puṣpa-mālā sarvāṅge pūrita
saubhāgya tilaka cāru lalāṭe ujjvala; prema vaicittya ratna, hṛdaye tarala
madhya vaya sthiti sakhī skandhe kara nyāsa; Kṛṣṇa līlā manovṛtti sakhī āśa pāśa
nijāṅga saurabhālaye garva paryaṅka; tā'te bosi āche sadā cinte Kṛṣṇa saṅga
Kṛṣṇa nāma guṇa yaśaḥ avataṁsa kāne; Kṛṣṇa nāma guṇa yaśaḥ pravāha vacane
Kṛṣṇake korāya śyāma-rasa madhupāna; nirantara pūrṇa kore kṛṣṇera sarva kāma
kṛṣṇera viśuddha prema ratnera ākara; anupama guṇagaṇa pūrṇa kalevara {C.C.}

"Rādhā is anointed with the fragrant ointment of affection towards Kṛṣṇa. This makes Her very fragrant body shine brightly. She takes Her first bath in a stream of the nectar of compassion, Her middle-bath in the stream of nectarean youthfulness and Her final bath in

[138] Explanation by Śrī Ānanda Gopāla Gosvāmī.

the stream of nectarean beauty. Then She puts on a silken blue *sārī* made of Her own bashfulness. Her second, red garment consists of passionate love for Kṛṣṇa and Her breasts are covered with a blouse of loving pique. She is anointed with three ointments - the vermilion of beauty, the sandalwoodpulp of the love of Her girlfriends and the camphor of Her lustrous smile. Her body is decorated with musk-pictures that represent Kṛṣṇa's brilliant erotic *rasa*. Her braid is made of hidden anger and opposition, and scented powder of Her calm, yet not-calm attributes adorn Her limbs. The red color of *pān*, that represents Her passionate love, brightens Her lips and Her eyes have eyeliner of the crookedness of love. Her body is adorned with all the ecstatic ornaments such as *sudīpta sāttvika bhāvas* and the *sañcārī-bhāvas* like *harṣa* (joy). She is also adorned with twenty other *bhāvas*, such as *kila kiñcita*. Her whole body is hung with flower garlands of attributes. Her forehead is brightened by beautiful *tilaka* of fortune. Prema Vaicittya is the jewel, and Her heart is the locket. She places Her hand on the shoulder of a girlfriend named adolescence and She is surrounded by Her *sakhīs* that represent Her mental activities, that are concentrated on Kṛṣṇa's pastimes. She sits on a bed of pride in the abode of Her aroma that is Her body, always thinking of Kṛṣṇa. Kṛṣṇa's names, attributes and glories are Her earrings (she loves to hear about them), and Kṛṣṇa's names, qualities and glories form the stream of Her words. She makes Kṛṣṇa drink the honey-beverage called Śyāma-*rasa* (erotic flavours) and She always fulfills all of Kṛṣṇa's desires. She's a mine full of jewels of pure love for Kṛṣṇa, and Her body is filled with all incomparable attributes."

O *bhāvuka bhaktavṛnda* (sensitive devotees)! This is the introduction to the embodiment of love for Kṛṣṇa! That is why the address *manojña hṛdaye* is justified here.

Śrīmatī lies down on the bed prepared for Her by Tulasī, like the Queen of swans (*rāja-haṁsī*) lying on an ocean of milk, enjoying with Śyāma in Her dream. She speaks, She laughs and She turns on Her other side in Her dream. Although Rūpa Mañjarī usually massages Śrīmatī's feet she has now mercifully given that service to Tulasī and has taken to the service of Svāminī's hands (*manojña* also means 'merciful'.[139] Svāminī Herself mercifully places Her lotus feet on 'Her' Tulasī's chest, knowing how anxious she is to serve them. *bhaktānāṁ hṛt-saroje madhura-rasa-sudhā syandi padāravindā* (Rādhā Rasa Sudhānidhi 127) "Her lotus feet pour the nectar of sweet *rasa* over the lotuslike hearts of the devotees". That is why She is addressed here as Sadaye, or merciful girl. Knowing what is on Tulasī's mind Svāminī lifts Her feet upon her chest. How intense is their feeling of 'possessiveness'! She takes Her maidservants to Her in all respects, calling them 'My Rūpa! My Tulasī!' How blissful it is to hear all this, what to speak of actually attaining this in truth? How mercifully Svāminī lifts Her lotus feet on Tulasī's chest! Śrī Raghunātha experiences this and calls Her Sadaye, merciful girl. How beautiful are Svāminī's limbs! She sees Rasa-rāja Śrī Kṛṣṇa in Her dream. Śyāma pervades Svāminī's dreams; how wonderfully She relishes this! Each of Her limbs blossoms up by relishing this sweet taste.[140] The fortunate maidservant swims in an ocean of *rasa.* Suddenly the vision vanishes and Śrī Raghunātha dāsa pitifully prays for this devotional service:

emon sudina hāy! kobe hobe mora ?
kobe pāda samvāhana, niyojibe dāsī jane,
ānande rahibe prema lora
śrī rūpa mañjari soi, śrī kara kamala dui,
samvāhana koribe hariṣe.
manojña hṛdaye ayi, kobe rādhe kṛpāmayi,
āni dibe se śubha divase.

(Śrī Rasika-Candra Dāsa)

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[139] Śrī Baṅgabihārī Vidyālaṅkāra writes: *para kātaryāsahanena manoharaṁ hṛdayaṁ mānasam* "She whose heart is enchanting because She cannot tolerate another person's misery is called *manojña*).

[140] This paragraph is narrated by Śrī Ānanda Gopāla Gosvāmī.

"Alas! When will that beautiful day be mine? When will You engage Your maidservant in massaging Your feet, while tears of loving ecstasy stream from her eyes and her friend Śrī Rūpa Mañjarī will blissfully massage Your beautiful lotus-like hands? Ayi beautiful-hearted girl! O merciful Rādhe! When will that blessed day come?"

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VERSE 56:

TAVODGĪRṆAṀ BHOJYAṀ SUMUKHI KILA KALLOLA SALILAṀ
TATHĀ PĀDĀMBHOJĀMṚTAM IHA MAYĀ BHAKTI LATAYĀ
AYI PREMṆĀ SĀRDHAṀ PRĀṆAYI JANA VARGAIR BAHU VIDHAIR
AHO LABDHAVYAṀ KIṀ PRĀCURATARA BHĀGYODAYA BALAIḤ

tava - Your; *udgīrṇam* - expelled; *bhojyaṁ* - eatables; *sumukhi* - O fairfaced Girl!; *kila* - certainly; *kallola* - waves; *salilaṁ* - water; *tathā* - and then; *pādāmbhoja* - lotus feet; *amṛtam* - nectar; *iha* - here; *mayā* - by me; *bhakti* - devotion; *latayā* - by a vine; *ayi* - O!; *premṇā sārdhaṁ* - with love; *praṇayi* - loving; *jana* - friends; *vargaiḥ* - with groups; *bahu* - many; *vidhaiḥ* - kinds; *aho* - o!; *labdhavyaṁ* - to be obtained; *kiṁ* - whether; *pracuratara* - greater amount; *bhāgya* - fortune; *udaya* - arising of; *balaiḥ* - by the forces.

O Sumukhi (fair-faced girl)! When will I, like a vine of devotion, on the strength of great arising fortune, obtain the remnants of food that You spat out along with Your gargling water and the water that has washed Your lotuslike feet? With love I shall enjoy it in so many ways along with Your other loving friends!

Explanations: Śrī Tulasī has massaged Svāminī's lotus feet and Śrī Rūpa has massaged Her hands. Svāminī lies to sleep on a wonderful bed. When this delectable vision vanishes Śrī Raghunātha weeps and laments, revealing his heartache to Svāminī. Again a revelation comes to him. He need not endeavour for such visions. *bhakti mṛṣṭa citta vṛttiṣu svataeva sphuriteṣu* "In hearts that are purified by devotion these visions appear spontaneously." The *līlā* is then the doer, not the *smaraṇa-kārī* (the devotee who practises *smaraṇa*). This free flow of *līlās* cannot come to a mind that is possessed by the material modes. The modes of darkness (*tamo-guṇa*) and passion (*rajo-guṇa*), and even that of goodness (*sattva-guṇa*) will not allow *smaraṇa* to take place, but devotion will gradually carry the devotee's heart and mind beyond these psychic qualities. Devotion liberates the soul from the knot of false ego and fills it with the identification of "I am God's servant."

yat pādapaṅkaja palāśa vilāsa bhaktyā karmāśayaṁ grathitam udgrathayanti santaḥ
tadvan na rikta-matayo yatayo niruddha sroto gaṇās tamaraṇaṁ bhaja vāsudevam

'Simply by being devoted to the lotus feet of the Lord the saints are liberated from the bondage of karmik reactions, unlike the empty-headed practitioners (of *jñāna* and *yoga*) that artificially try to control their senses. Therefore worship Vāsudeva, who is very kind to the surrendered souls!" (Śrīmad Bhāgavata 4.22.39) The hearts and minds of the devotees are stolen by the sweetness of devotional life. It cannot be forgotten anymore, even they he would try it! Anyone who has experienced this will understand it. Māyā makes the mind very coarse, but when the mind remains at the lotus feet of the Lord we can understand how pure, tender and innocent the mind actually is. *dhautātma purusaḥ Kṛṣṇa pādamūlaṁ na muñcati* (Bhāg. 2.8.5) "A purified soul never leaves the lotus feet of Kṛṣṇa." Unfortunately a person like me is exactly in the opposite position. Although I want to forget about material life I cannot forget it. Devotional love alone can purify the heart. How tender is the heart of someone who practises *mañjarī bhāva*! How honey-sweet are their hearts! Śrīla Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura has sung:

rādhā Kṛṣṇa sevana, ekānta koriyā mana,
caraṇa kamala boli yāo
doṅhāra nāma guṇa śuni, bhakta mukhe puni puni,
parama ānanda sukha pāu

"Fix your mind completely on the service of the lotus feet of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa, constantly hear of Their attributes from the mouths of the devotees and you will reach the pinnacle of bliss!"

hema gaurī tanu rāi, āṅkhi daraśana cāi,
rodana koribo abhilāṣa
jaladhara ḍhara ḍhara, aṅga ati manohara,
rūpe bhuvana parakāśa

"My eyes want to see the golden form of Rāi, and are crying out of this desire. Kṛṣṇa's very enchanting body shines in the world like a dripping raincloud."

sakhī-gaṇa cāri pāśe, sevā kori abhilāṣe,
se sevā parama sukha dhare
ei mana tanu mora, ei rase sadā bhora,
narottama sadāi vihare

"All around, the *sakhīs* are desiring Their service and when they get that service they are most blissful!" Narottama says: "My mind and my body are always absorbed in this *rasa*."

Whoever falls in an ocean of nectar becomes immortal and nectarean. By the special mercy of Śrīman Mahāprabhu Śrīla Raghunātha Dāsa similarly has become filled with *prema* by falling in the ocean of service to Śrī Rādhikā, who is sacred love personified. He is fully absorbed in his identification as Rādhā's maidservant. A vision comes to him. Svāminī is sleeping. Now the *kiṅkarīs* take their meal of remnants left by Svāminī before She went to sleep. How fortunate they are! They can eat Her leftover food and betelleaves, drink the water with which She has flushed Her mouth and the water with which they have washed Her lotus feet. This fortune is even far away from the *sakhīs*! While Svāminī was eating, She spat some food out on a plate as if She did not like the taste of it. She knows the desire on Her maidservants' mind, so in this way She grants them opportunities to enjoy Her leftover food. How strong is Her feeling of possessiveness for Her maidservants! How tasty the food has become after having been in Her mouth. The maidservants know this, and that's why Tulasī calls Her Sumukhi, fairfaced girl, here. It is as if love has met in one place, has taken the form of a *kiṅkarī* and is eating a share of this wonderful nectar. The *kiṅkarīs* serve Svāminī *ācamana* (water for flushing the mouth) and Svāminī spits that water into a golden spittoon. After Svāminī has gone to sleep, the maidservants jokingly feed Each other. The practising devotee

should also always get a particle of this *prasāda* in his *smaraṇa*. The identification of a *kiṅkarī* is required, otherwise the sweetness of this mood cannot be experienced. "How intoxicated I am with this temporary material body!" Bodily consciousness is an evil that takes the mind in the wrong direction, therefore the *sādhaka* should vow this:

āna kathā nā bolibo, āna kathā nā śunibo,
sakali koribo paramārtha
prārthanā koribo sadā, lālasā abhīṣṭa kathā,
ihā vinā sakali anartha

(Prema Bhakti Candrikā)

"I will not speak anything else or hear anything else (but Kṛṣṇa-*kathā*), I will live a completely spiritual life. I will always pray and yearn for topics of my beloved deity. Without this everything is simply mischief." The devotee should cry with his heart for some experience: 'How unfortunate I am that I have learned about the highest thing but I cannot take to it!' Without surrender this path cannot be attained. Some explain the word *udgīrṇa bhojya* in the text to mean 'chewed betelleaves'. Svāminī knows so many ways to give Her mercy (*prasāda*) to Her maidservants. Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī wrote in Utkalikā Vallari (62):

āsye devyāḥ katham api mudā nyastam āsyāt tvayeśa
kṣipta parṇe praṇaya janitād devi vāmyāt tvayāgre
ākūtajñas tad ati nibhṛtaṁ carvitaṁ kharvitāṅgas
tāmbūlīyaṁ rasayati janaḥ phulla romā kadāyam

Śrī Rūpa Mañjarī has arranged for the Youthful Couple to meet in a *kuñja*, so They feel They should reward her somehow. Śyāma holds Svāminī's face and pushes His chewed betelleaves from His mouth into Her mouth. Svāminī then makes a dirty face, as if She wants to say: "Yek! Do I have to chew the remnants of this debauchee, whose mouth kisses so many other girls?", looks in Rūpa Mañjarī's direction and spits the chewed betelleaves out on a plate. In this way the maidservants are also blessed with Svāminī's chewed food- or spice-remnants! Śrī Rūpa Mañjarī prays: "When will I have goosepimples of ecstasy on my small body when You give me these remnants in a very lonely place?" The practising devotee should also relish Svāminī's loving compassion towards him when he remembers these transcendental pastimes. His meditation has taken solid form; Svāminī's remembrance is most blissful. Everything in this world is giving trouble and pain, and the devotee anxiously prays "Don't keep me in this material world anymore! Make me a maidservant of Your lotus feet! *tuyā pāda-padma koro anucarī*. How long will I have to stay in this world while I'm winding up my material existence? The light that emanates from Svāminī's lotus feet will make me forget *māyā*". The *dāsī* washes Svāminī's mouth with water from a golden bowl. Śrīmatī spits Her mouthwater back into the golden bowl, and then She says: "Wash My feet!". There is a special plate for catching Her footwater also. Tulasī introduces herself by saying: "I am a vine of devotion for You and this vine will grow higher and higher and get blooming flowers and fruits of love for You, as long as I sprinkle it with the water with which You have flushed Your mouth and which has washed Your lotuslike feet! Other than this nectar, I will not accept anything!"[141]
Śrī Haripada Śila sings:

he sumukhi nivedana, sukhamaya vṛndāvane,
mora bhāgya hobe anukūla.
priya sahacari sane, koribo ki āsvādane,

[141] These two paragraphs are narrated by Śrī Ānanda Gopāla Gosvāmī.

sudhā sāra carvita tāmbūla.

"O fair-faced girl! This is my prayer: when will fortune turn my way in blissful Vṛndāvana, so that I can relish Your chewed betelnuts, that are the essence of nectar, together with my girlfriends?"

mukha prakṣālana jala, Kṛṣṇa bhakti dite bol,
bhakti latāya koribe siñcana.
caraṇa amṛta pāna, kori juḍāibo prāṇa,
premāṅkura hoibe udgama

"Your gargling water, that has the power to bestow Kṛṣṇa-*bhakti,* will shower my vine of devotion, and the nectarean water that washed Your lotus feet will cause the seed of my *prema* to sprout."

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VERSE 57:

BHOJANĀVASARE DEVI SNEHENA SVA MUKHĀMBUJĀT
MAHYAṀ TVAD GATA CITTĀYAI KIṀ SUDHĀS TVAṀ PRADĀSYASI

bhojana - eating; *avasare* - opportunity; *devi* - goddess; *snehena* - affectionately; *sva* - own; *mukha* - mouth; *ambujāt* - from the lotus; *mahyaṁ* - to me; *tvad* - unto You; *gata* - dedicated; *cittāyai* - unto the heart (fem.); *kiṁ* - whether; *sudhā* - nectar; *tvaṁ* - You; *pradāsyasi* - will give.

O Devi (goddess)! When will You, while You are eating, affectionately give me, whose heart is dedicated to You, the nectarean remnants from Your lotuslike mouth?

Explanations: Śrī Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī falls on the bank of Śrī Rādhākuṇḍa and laments pitifully: "Hā Svāmini! I'm passing my time in great pain, because the lamp of hope is still burning! If You are not merciful, then what's the use of my living in Vraja? What's the use of my maintaining my life, that is only burning with separation? What's the use even of attaining Kṛṣṇa to me?" Actually, without Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī's mercy Kṛṣṇa can never be attained. *vinā rādhā prasādena Kṛṣṇa-prāptir na jāyate*. Śrīla Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura sings:

rādhikā caraṇa reṇu, bhūṣaṇa koriyā tanu,
anāyāse pābe giridhārī
rādhikā caraṇāśraya, ye kore se mahāśaya,
tāre mui yāi bolihārī

"Anyone who decorates one's body with Rādhikā's footdust easily gets Giridhārī. I praise any great soul who takes shelter of Rādhikā's lotus feet!"

jaya jaya rādhā nāma, vṛndāvana yāra dhāma,

Kṛṣṇa sukha vilāsera nidhi,
heno rādhā guṇa gāna, na śunilo mora kāna,
vañchita korilo more vidhi

"Glory, glory to the holy name of Rādhā, that resides in Vṛndāvana, and that is the jewel of Kṛṣṇa's pastimes! Fate has deprived me by not letting me hear the glorification of Rādhā!"

tāra bhakta saṅge sadā, rasa līlā prema kathā,
ye kore se pāy ghanaśyāma
ihāte vimukha yei, tāra kabhu siddhi nāi,
nāhi yeno śuni tāra nāma

"Anyone who associates with Rādhā's devotees and speaks about Her *rasa*, Her pastimes and Her love, will attain Ghanaśyāma (Kṛṣṇa), but anyone who is against this will never attain perfection. Let us not even hear these people's names."

Kṛṣṇa nāma gāne bhāi, rādhikā caraṇa pāi,
rādhā nāma gāne Kṛṣṇa candra.
saṅkṣepe kohinu kothā, ghucāo monera byathā,
duḥkhamaya anya kathā dhanda

"O brother! When you sing Kṛṣṇa's name you will get Rādhikā's lotus feet and when you sing Rādhā's name you will get Kṛṣṇa-candra. I told you this shortly, so now extinguish the pain in your mind. All other topics are simply miserable!"

Śrīman Mahāprabhu instructs us in chanting the dual Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa name, which consists of thirty-two syllables, sixteen words and eight joints. This *mantra* is called *āhvanātmaka nāma*, which means that one calls out to the Lord with it (it is not just for silent meditation, like most other *mantras*), or *tāraka brahma nāma* (the transcendental saviour-name). The best way to enter into the *nikuñja mandira* and to serve Śrī Rādhikā there is to congregationally chant this *hare Kṛṣṇa-sambodhanātmaka nāma* (a *mantra* simply consisting of addresses). Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī says:

nāma saṅkīrtanaṁ proktaṁ Kṛṣṇasya prema sampadi;
baliṣṭhaṁ sādhanaṁ proktaṁ paramākarṣa mantravat

(Bṛhad Bhāgavatāmṛta 2.3.164)

"The Śrī Kṛṣṇa-*nāma-saṅkīrtana* is the most powerful means to attain the treasure of love of Kṛṣṇa. It is like a most attractive *mantra*." The Lord will personally appear before anyone who chants this *nāma saṅkīrtana* with an innocent and eager heart. Srī nāma saṅkīrtana will attract the most precious thing, just like a perfect *mantra*.

tad eva manyate bhakteḥ phalaṁ tad rasikair janaiḥ
bhagavat prema sampattau sadaivāvyabhicārataḥ

"For this reason the *bhakti-rasikas* (the relishers of devotion) have defined it as the 'fruit of devotion'. It is always the most faultless way to attain the treasure of *prema*." (idem 2.3.165) Someone may ask here: "I thought that the goal of *sādhana-bhakti* was *prema*, and that *nāma-saṅkīrtana* was also a kind of *sādhana*. How can it be called the goal then here?" The answer to that is: "It's true, *nāma saṅkīrtana* brings the treasure of *prema* and because the appearance of *prema* is certain through the practice of *nāma saṅkīrtana* it is also called the fruit or result of devotional practice. There's never any exception to that rule, and therefore

the saints call *nāma saṅkīrtana* the fruit of devotional practice. Along with *smaraṇa, nāma saṅkīrtana* swiftly enables the practising devotee to relish the sweetness of Śrī-Śrī Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa.

Śrī Raghunātha experiences the wonderful *rasa* of Śrī Rādhā's sweetness in his heart. When the viewer sees a most lovely thing he feels ecstatic and astonished. The narrowing of his consciousness will cease and his consciousness will be expanded. That's why the *alaṅkāra śāstras* (scriptures on metaphores) call astonishment the life-force of *rasa. rase sāraś camatkāro yaṁ vinā na raso rasaḥ* (Alaṅkāra Kaustubha). On the one hand is the great sweetness of Rādhā, that enchants even world-enchanting Kṛṣṇa, and on the other hand there is Śrīmad Dāsa Gosvāmī's great passionate love for Rādhā, that causes a wonderful astonishment in his mind and makes him thirst for Her direct devotional service. Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī gives the following definition of the word *anurāga:*

sadānubhūtam api yaḥ kuryān nava navaṁ priyam
rāgo bhavan nava navaḥ so'nurāga itīryate

"*anurāga* is a lasting and even increasing attraction to something which is being experienced all the time. This *anurāga* makes the beloved object appear to be ever-fresh." (Ujjvala Nīlamaṇi Sthāyi 146) This thirsty *anurāga* is clearly seen in all of the verses of Vilāpa Kusumāñjali. The lamentations of Śrī Raghunātha dāsa, who was greatly afflicted by feelings of separation before leaving the manifest plane (passing away) are heartbreaking and cause the hearts of the devotees to melt.

In his *svarūpāveśa* Śrī Raghunātha, in his form of Tulasī Mañjarī, lays Svāminī to rest on a selfmade bed and attains the good fortune of massaging Her lotus feet. When She falls asleep the maidservants, that are like Her very own life, drink the water that has flushed Her mouth (*adharāmṛta*) and that has washed Her feet (*caraṇāmṛta*). In this verse Tulasī desires another indescribable *prasāda*. When Raghunātha is absorbed in his vision he gets the *prasāda* in his *siddha svarūpa* and when the vision stops he prays. While eating Svāminī will use some opportunity (*avasara*) to secretly call Tulasī close to Her to affectionately give Her the nectarean foodremnants from Her lotuslike mouth. How great are Her feelings of possessiveness! The *kiṅkarīs* want nothing else and know nothing else in this world but Śrī Rādhikā's lotus feet and Her happiness. That's why She is so merciful to them! Tulasī has given her heart to Śrī Rādhā and reveals her maidservant's heart to Her. How much love and affection there is between them, that should one time be considered. Some editions of this book mention the reading *tad gata cittāyai*, which means: 'My heart is dedicated to Your foodremnants'. (*tasyā mukhāmbujastha sudhāyāṁ gataṁ magnaṁ cittaṁ yasyāḥ sā*) Tulasī thinks: 'Just fancy if I could get some (of these remnants)! Svāminī knows her mind and secretly calls her near. "I have rendered my service, and I am close by now. Perhaps Svāminī will draw me towards Her and kiss me, or give me Her chewed betelleaves. How merciful She is! O Premamayi, Karuṇāmayi Rādhe! When will I be blessed by attaining a drop of Your mercy? I'm sitting here, constantly waiting for the blessed day that I will get Your mercy!"[142] The practising devotee should also become greedy for this indescribable *prasāda*. With such transcendental greed the devotee should enter the path of *rāgānugā bhakti*. Sacred greed after the mood of the people of Vraja, like Tulasī Mañjarī, is the only means to enter into that and there is no consideration within the mind of such a devotee of being qualified or unqualified. The transcendental greed causes all discrimination to vanish and awakens only insatiable desires in the heart of the devotee. Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī has defined the eligibility to enter into *rāgānugā bhakti* as follows:

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142 Narrated by Śrī Ānanda Gopāla Gosvāmī.

rāgātmikaika niṣṭhā ye vrajavāsi janādayaḥ
teṣāṁ bhāvāptaye lubdho bhavet atrādhikāravān
tat tat bhāvādi mādhurye śrute dhīr yad apekṣate
nātra śāstraṁ na yuktiṁ ca tal lobhotpatti lakṣaṇam

"Anyone who desires to attain the feelings of the residents of Vraja, who are exclusively fixed in ragatmika bhakti, qualifies for raganuga bhakti. The hallmark of the birth of sacred greed after these feelings is that after hearing of the sweetness of their different emotions the conscience disregards scriptural rules or common sense."" (Bhakti Rasāmṛta Sindhu 1.2.291-292)

The desire for even a drop of this nectar-ocean of devotional service will arise in the heart of a fortunate devotee who thus hears of Tulasī Mañjarī's faithful devotion and her great fortune. How afffectionate Svāminī is to Tulasī! Tulasī has given her heart to her. It is natural that you are merciful towards someone who has no other shelter than you. Śrī Raghunātha says: "I tell You honestly: I have sold my heart to Your lotus feet! I have no one else but You in this world! Overwhelmed by love for me You have put the chewed remnants of Your nectarean food in my mouth. This is the greatest *amṛta* (nectar, or immortality) and it made me immortal. My offering has reached perfection now that You accepted it, that can be seen by Your bodily activities. An unbroken absorption in drinking nectar can never be in vain". When the vision vanishes the turbulent desires for this nectar-drink awakens.
Śrī Haripada Śila sings:

he devi nivedana, tomara sukha sādhane,
ekānta hoyeche mora mana.
ei dhyāna ei japa, ei vrata ei tapa,
ei mora dharama karama

"O Devi! This is my prayer! Making You happy is the only desire on my mind! This is my meditation, my *japa*, my vow, my austerity, my religious principle and my duty!"

bhojanera avasare, kṛpā diṭhe sneha bhare,
mukha padma hoite phelā lava
āmāra vāñchita nidhi, nija pada dāsī bhāvi,
kobe dibe parama sampad ?

"While You eat You cast an affectionate glance at me and drop a fragment of Your food from Your lotuslike mouth. That is my desired treasure. When will You give this footmaiden that supreme treasure?"

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VERSE 58:

API BATA RASAVATYĀḤ SIDDHAYE MĀDHAVASYA
VRAJAPATI PURAM UDYAD ROMA ROMĀ VRAJANTĪ
SKHALITA GATIR UDAÑCAT SVĀNTA SAUKHYENA KIṀ ME
KVACID API NAYANĀBHYĀṀ LAPSYASE SVĀMINI TVAM

api - even; *bata* - alas!; *rasavatyāḥ* - of cooking; *siddhaye* - for the perfection of; *mādhavasya* - of Mādhava; *vraja pati* - the king of Vraja; *puram* - to the town; *udyad* - erect; *roma romā* - pores;

vrajantī - they go; *skhalita* - stumbling; *gatiḥ* - gait; *udañcat* - rising; *svānta* - inner; *saukhyena* - with happiness; *kiṁ* - whether; *me* - mine; *kvacid* - ever; *api* - even; *nayanābhyāṁ* - through the eyes; *lapsyase* - will be obtained; *svāmini* - mistress; *tvam* - You.

O Svāmini (mistress)! Can I ever catch You with my eyes as You walk to the city of the king of Vraja to cook for Mādhava (Kṛṣṇa), Your gait faltering and Your hair standing on end out of joy?

Explanations: The more the devotee experiences, the more the devotee's devotional hope increases. When devotion appears in the heart the devotee feels himself unqualified, but he is also bound by strong hopes for attaining the beloved:

kva jano'yam atīva pāmaraḥ kva durāpaṁ rati bhāgbhir apy adaḥ
iyam ullalayaty ajarjarā gurur uttarṣa dhurā tathāpi mām

(Utkalikā Vallari 26, Rūpa Gosvāmī)

"Where am I, a very wicked soul and where is this love, that is rarely attained even by great devotees? Still I am agitated by strong hope for attaining this!" This hope is nectar and is the support of life. This hope will be very strong in *svarūpāveśa.* This is a very beautiful thing. Much mischief will go by thinking 'I am Rādhā's maidservant!' *svarūpāveśa* will set fire to the mischief of lust and anger in the heart. From Sanātana Gosvāmī's Bṛhad Bhāgavatāmṛta it is known that: "I don't have the power to experience the bliss of meeting the Lord, separation is my practice." A person who has not experienced separation first cannot desire meeting. In *svarūpāveśa* separation will be experienced, not in bodily consciousness. In *svarūpāveśa* the practising devotee will constantly think: "When will I get it?" *jala vinā yeno mīna, duḥkha pāya āyu-hīna* "I feel so miserable I could die, like a fish out of water." The devotee sits down in the marketplace of mercy and gets what he desires by paying the price of having a feeling of dearth. The suitable place for having this feeling of dearth is Vraja-*dhāma*. Here the separated devotee wanders around, looking for his desired deity, weeping and lamenting. When Gopa Kumāra came to the terrestrial Vraja his condition was thus: *sadā mahārtyā karuṇa svarair udan nayāmi rātrir divasāṁś ca kātaraḥ* "I spent all days and nights there weeping in great distress with a pitiful voice." In the material world a person is so distressed when he loses a child or so that he sits down in a lonely place without speaking to anyone, simply crying. "People of the world become mad when they are out of money. O Rādhe! When will I feel like this about You?" When a devotee reaches that condition Svāminī cannot stay far away anymore. The question may now arise: "Money and children are very tangible things, aren't they? Rādhārāṇī is not such a tangible thing; how can we experience Her? How can we think of Her, while we have never experienced Her?" The answer is: "You can't experience Her because You don't think of yourself as Her maidservant. This awareness will arise when You experience your relationship with Her. *bhajana* will swiftly be accomplished in this way". *ānanda kori hṛdaya, ripu kori parājaya, anāyāse govinda bhajibo* (Prema Bhakti Candrikā) "My heart will be filled with joy when I defeat my enemies (lust, anger, greed etc.) and I will easily worship Govinda". A person in *svarūpāveśa* may be engaged in worldly duties, but his mind is always fixed on the lotus feet of his beloved deity. Śrīman Mahāprabhu compared these devotees with wives that have a paramour. The wife may be engaged in her householdwork, but her mind is always fixed on her paramour. When her household work is somehow accomplished she will run off

to her lover. In the same way the devotee is also taking the lotus feet of Śrī Rādhā in his heart in a lonely place whenever he can get out of his material entanglement. "Everyone in this world calls me 'mine, mine', but I don't lend an ear to this. I will meditate on Svāminī's lotus feet, Her form, Her attributes and Her pastimes. I will see to it that She will be satisfied with my devotional service!"[143] Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī has written the essential instructions down in his Upadeśāmṛta (8):

tan nāma rūpa caritādi sukīrtanānu-smṛtyoḥ kramena rasanā manasī niyojya
tiṣṭhan vraje tad anurāgi janānugāmī kālaṁ nayed akhilam ity upadeśa sāram

"Gradually the devotee must become more and more absorbed in engaging the tongue and the mind in chanting and remembering the glories of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa's names, forms and pastimes, spending all his time living in Vraja in allegiance to the *rāgānugā bhaktas.* This is the quintessence of all instruction."

In this verse Śrī Raghunātha dāsa perceives Śrī Rādhā's pastime of going to Nandīśvara to cook for Kṛṣṇa in the early morning. He is himself not the controller of these visions - they come to him spontaneously. When the pastimes manifest themselves spontaneously he relishes them and when they vanish he prays. He is not able to decide the course of their succession. By the blessing of Durvāsā Muni Śrī Rādhikā has become Amṛta Pāṇi, She Whose hand turns everything She cooks into nectar, increasing the lifespan of everyone who eats it, destroying their diseases, nourishing their bodies and giving them the taste of nectar. For this reason mother Yaśodā, who is always overwhelmed by feelings of love for her son, daily asks Her to come to her home to cook for Kṛṣṇa through the agency of Kundalatā. Of course, Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī, being *svayaṁ bhagavatī*, the Supreme and Original Goddess, does not need boons from anyone. Garga Muni and Durvāsā Muni are only (unconsciously) assisting in increasing the spiritual erotic flavour for Kṛṣṇa. Kundalatā obtains permission from mother Jaṭilā to bring Rādhikā to Nandīśvara, although Jaṭilā mistrusts the naughty son of Nanda, Kṛṣṇa. All the *gopīs* walk along with Kundalatā like a marketplace of moons, illuminating all the forestpaths with their sweet splendour. All the *gopīs* cover their heads with their veils when they pass through the village of Yāvat, but when they leave the boundaries of the village they open their veils again. How sweetly Tulasī addresses Rādhārāṇī here: 'Svāmini!' There's not a whiff of bodily consciousness in this address. "You're going to cook for Your Prāṇanātha, that's why You are overwhelmed by ecstasy and You may sometimes trip and stumble. I will see it and understand it! The veil of Your mind will be opened for me and nothing will remain hidden!" This must be understood through the mind of the *ācārya.* Just see once how the sincere devotees are fixed in remembering these transcendental pastimes! They are horripilating of ecstasy when they remember the sweetness of Svāminī's each and every limb and gesture. Svāminī's happiness will arise in the heart of the *kiṅkarī* (the *kiṅkarī* knows when her Svāminī is happy). We also want to become qualified to experience this in the heart. *śrīśvarī dṛṣṭi vāg ādi sarveṅgita vicakṣaṇam*: One should want to understand all hints that Śrīśvarī makes with Her glances and words etc. This is not possible without giving up all desires other than the lotus feet of Śrī Rādhā. One should always desire to absorb one's mind in the ocean of blissful love for Śrī Rādhā: *rādhā pādābja sevānya spṛhā kāla trayojjhitam; rādhā prīti sukhāmbhodhāv apāre buḍitam sadā* "In past, present or future the *kiṅkarīs* have no other desire than to serve Śrī Rādhā's lotus feet. They are always immersed in a shoreless ocean of blissful love for Śrī Rādhā" (Vṛndāvana Mahimāmṛta, Eighth Śatakam).

Svāminī proceeds to Nandīśvara, the village of Śrī Nandarāja, the king of Vraja, to cook for Mādhava - Vraja Rāja Kumāra, the free enjoyer, who is always absorbed in His delectable pastimes. He is the Līlā Puruṣottama, the ever-sportive Lord, who likes to play so much that

[143] The explanation on this page is by Śrī Ānanda Gopāla Gosvāmī.

He is intoxicated in ever-fresh sports. Kṛṣṇa is thus called Līlāmaya, and Svāminī always immerses this Līlāmaya in an ocean of delectable sports. How sweetly She is placing Her steps! How nicely Her anklebells are jingling! How sweetly She is joking with Her girlfriends on the way! She's so absorbed in laughing and joking that She has no idea where She is going to or where She is coming from. It is as if She perceives the reflection of Her Priyatama (dearmost beloved) in the mirror of Her heart." Kundalatā tells Svāminī: "The desires of Your Cātaka-bird-like eyes will be fulfilled now by seeing Your cloud-like lover Ghanaśyāma!" When Svāminī hears this Her vine-like body trembles and the hairs on Her body stand erect of bliss like blooming flowers of love. Tulasī is like a female bee that drinks all the honey that drips from these love-flowers. Suddenly the vision vanishes and Śrī Raghunātha weeps and prays: "When can I see You in this sweet way?"
Śrī Haripada Śila sings:

he svāmini śrī rādhikā, Kṛṣṇa keli ārādhikā,
mādhavera bhojya upacāre,
randhana korite yabe, sakhī gaṇa saṅge yābe,
vrajapati pura nandīśvare

mukhete govinda nāma, aśru-dhāra avirāma,
pulake purita kalevara.
skhalita cañcala gati, rase vibhāvita mati,
smaraṇete govinda sundara.

"O Svāmini Rādhikā! O worshiper of Kṛṣṇa's plays! When You go to the town of Nandīśvara, the abode of the king of Vraja, with Your girlfriends to cook Mādhava's meal, tears are constantly streaming from Your eyes, Your skin is studded with goosepimples of ecstasy and Your mouth sings the name of Govinda. Your gait stumbles and Your mind is absorbed in *rasa*, remembering Śyāmasundara."

bhāvāviṣṭa nava gaurī, dekhibo nayana bhari,
pathe kori puṣpa variṣane.
sabāra paścāte yābo, pada cihna luṭāibo,
aśru-jala koriyā siñcane.

"I will fill up my eyes with the vision of this young golden beauty who is absorbed in loving ecstasy and shower flowers on Her path. I will walk behind everyone else and roll in Her footprints, showering them with my tears of love."

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VERSE 59:

PĀRŚVA-DVAYE LALITAYĀTHA VIŚĀKHAYĀ CA
TVAṀ SARVATAḤ PARIJANAIŚ CA PARAIḤ PARĪTĀM
PAŚCĀN MAYĀ VIBHṚTA BHAṄGURA MADHYA BHĀGĀṀ
KIṀ RŪPA MAÑJARIR IYAṀ PATHI NEṢYATĪHA

pārśva - side; *dvaye* - on both; *lalitayā* - by Lalitā; *atha* - then; *viśākhayā* - by Viśākhā; *ca* - and; *tvaṁ* - You; *sarvataḥ* - everywhere; *parijanaiḥ* - by friends; *ca* - and; *paraiḥ* - by others; *parītām* -

surrounded; *paścāt* - behind; *mayā* - by Me; *vibhṛta* - carried; *bhaṅgura* - brittle; *madhya bhāgāṁ* - waist; *kiṁ* - whether; *rūpa mañjariḥ* - Rūpa Mañjarī; *iyaṁ* - this; *pathi* - on the path; *neṣyati* - takes; *iha* - here.

Will Rūpa Mañjarī lead You on the path with Lalitā and Viśākhā on Your two sides, Your friends all around You, and me holding Your brittle waist from behind ?

Explanations: In *smaraṇa*, dreams and in visions Śrī Raghunātha feels the vicinity of Śrī Rādhārāṇī and experiences Śrīmatī's most coveted form, fragrance, touch, sound and taste. Now he sees Svāminī going to Nandīśvara to cook for Her beloved Kṛṣṇa. How vivid is the experience of the perfected souls! Siddha Kṛṣṇa dāsa Bābājī of Govardhana has written:

hā hā prāṇeśvari! kundalatā kare dhari
lalitādi sakhī saṅge, gamana koribe raṅge,
pāche loiyā yābo jala jhāri

"O Queen of my heart! As Kundalatā holds Your hand and You walk along with Lalitā and other *sakhīs* I will follow You with a pitcher of water."

koto raṅga rasa kathā, puchiben kundalatā,
sakhī saṅge hariṣe kohite
aṅga pulakita ati, skhalita hoibe gati,
Kṛṣṇa-sukha anubhavi cite

"Kundalatā asks You so many *rasika* playful questions and You happily converse with Your girlfriends. Your hairs will stand on end and Your gait will falter as You experience the bliss of Kṛṣṇa-consciousness."

It's great ecstasy! Svāminī goes to Kṛṣṇa to make Him happy with Her service. The nature of *prema* is that it just wants to make Kṛṣṇa happy. Śrī Jīva Gosvāmī has described three grounds to *prema - viṣayānukūlyātmakas tadānukūlyānugata tat spṛhā tad anubhava hetukollāsamaya jñāna viśeṣaḥ priyatā* (Prīti Sandarbha 61) 1): "The soul of *prīti* is the desire to make Kṛṣṇa happy or to be favorable to His happiness. 2) The arising of different desires in the lover for the sake of Kṛṣṇa's happiness 3) When Kṛṣṇa is happy the lover is happy. The first of these is the constitutional hallmark (*svarūpa lakṣaṇa)* of *prema* and the other two are the marginal hallmarks (*taṭastha lakṣaṇa*). The extraordinary constitutional position of *prema* is the exclusive aim to make its object (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) happy. The desires arise in the heart of the loving devotee to make Kṛṣṇa happy with different devotional services that please Him and that help the devotee to attain Him. The awareness that Kṛṣṇa is happy gives the devotee boundless bliss, although he does not have his desires for personal happiness fulfilled.

prīti viṣayānande tad āśrayānanda;
tāhā nahi nija sukha vāñchāra sambandha
nirupadhi prema yāhā - tāhā ei rīti
prīti viṣaya sukhe āśrayera prīti

"The happiness of the abode of love is the happiness of the object of that love. This is not a relationship of desire for personal happiness, it is one of causeless love. The reservoir of

love becomes happy when the object of love is happy." (C.C. Ādi 4, 199-200) Svāminījī makes blissful Kṛṣṇa experience His bliss. There are only very few people who want to make Him happy. Outside of Vraja everyone seeks personal happiness. All the endeavours of the Vraja-sundarīs are meant to make Kṛṣṇa happy, though, and the greatest of them is Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī. Śrī Kṛṣṇa Himself says:

āmā hoite ānandita hoy tribhuvana; āmāke ānande dibe aiche kon jana
āmā hoite yāra hoy śata śata guṇa; sei jana āhlādite pāre mora mana
āmā hoite guṇī boḍo jagate asambhava; ekali rādhāte tāhā kori anubhava {C.C.}

"All the three worlds are delighted by Me, but is there any person who can delight Me? Only a person who is a hundred times more qualified than Me can delight My mind. It is impossible for anyone in this world to be more qualified than Me. I only experience that in Rādhā." Although there are many loving devotees in Vraja, Kṛṣṇa became very eager to fathom the greatness of the foremost of them, Śrī Rādhā. But it cannot be said that He has fully fathomed it after becoming Gaura. Even the Supreme Lord Himself could not find the limits to this love! He goes on gauging and relishing it forever - hence Gaura-*līlā* is also eternal. Śrī Gaurasundara kept Rādhā's mood in the heart and showed the world that such a love cannot be found anywhere else. "Still I did not understand and I am deprived of this great gift once more! Śrī Svāminījī is the embodiment of *prema*, and if I could surrender to Her lotus feet I would be fulfilled!" From the viewpoint of *tattva* it can also be understood that the *śaktimān* (possessor of the energy) is fully controlled by the *śakti* (the energy). *rādhā pūrṇa śakti - Kṛṣṇa pūrṇa śaktimān; dui vastu bheda nāhi śāstrera pramāṇa* (C.C.) "Rādhā is the full energy and Kṛṣṇa is the full possessor of that energy. There's no difference between the two, that is proven by the scriptures." In any case Kṛṣṇa is fully under the control of Śrī Rādhā, the personification of complete love. How eager She is to serve Śyāmasundara! Although She has hundreds and hundreds of *sakhīs* and *mañjarīs*, Ullāsavatī (blissful Rādhikā) personally serves Him. Whatever She cooks tastes like nectar, because of the boon bestowed upon Her by Durvāsā Muni. One day mother Kīrtidā had invited Nanda and Yaśodā with their family to enjoy the nectarean food cooked by Śrī Rādhikā. After mother Yaśodā had enjoyed these dishes and after she had seen how much her Gopāla liked to eat them, she said: "From today on my Kṛṣṇa will not be happy by eating anything else but the dishes prepared by your daughter!" From that day on Vṛṣabhānu-nandinī daily goes to Nandīśvara, king Nanda's abode, to cook for Kṛṣṇa with Her *sakhīs*. The loving devotee is only happy when the object of his service is happy and he does not like to leave this duty to others. Although mother Yaśodā has hundreds of maidservants, she personally churns curd for Kṛṣṇa and king Nanda personally milks the cows, although there are hundreds of cowherd men who can do that. Svāminī stumbles on the way out of ecstasy, since She will personally cook for Kṛṣṇa, although She also has thousands of *sakhīs* and *mañjarīs* who could do it![144]

Svāminī walks down the road with Kundalatā, with Lalitā and Viśākhā on Her either side and so many *sakhīs* and *mañjarīs* surrounding Her. On the way Svāminī makes so many intimate jokes with Her friends! Tulasī walks behind Her, holding Her brittle waist, being afraid that it will break. How much loving care this maidservant takes! How much loving feeling of possessiveness she feels! When Śrīmatī becomes tired on the way She holds Her arm on Śrī Rūpa Mañjarī's shoulder. The practising devotee should think of him/herself walking behind Svāminī also, always worrying about Her welfare and comfort. We want the vicinity of our *sevyā*. *Smaraṇa* means mental association. This God-realised *smaraṇa* can only take place in the heart and mind of someone who is free from the faults of attachment and hatred and so on. When *smaraṇa* becomes very intense this mental association becomes an

[144] Narrated by Śrī Ānanda Gopāla Gosvāmī.

actual experience. Śrīpāda Rāmānujācārya teaches: *bhavati ca smṛter bhāvanā prakarṣād darśana rūpatā* "When *smaraṇa* deepens all other thoughts subside and the attention becomes one-pointed, which will result in actual experiences." "I'm chanting the holy name, and Śrī Gaurasundara is hearing it, mad of ecstasy!" This is the kind of experience we want. *bhāvite bhāvite Kṛṣṇa sphuraye antare* (C.C. Madhya 19,235) "By constant meditation Kṛṣṇa becomes manifest in the heart." When we hear and chant the holy words of the *ācāryas* we experience the deity's vicinity. Śrī Kṛṣṇa told Bilvamaṅgala Ṭhākura: "I've heard all of your words and I'm right here with you. Your words sound like nectar to My ears, therefore your book will be called Kṛṣṇa Karṇāmṛta!" The Lord will be happy when the devotee relishes the sweetness of each and every item of *bhajan.* Then his practice has become a success. Śrī Raghunātha has a vivid experience of Śrīmatī's going to Nandīśvara and when the vision vanishes he prays.
Śrī Haripada Śila sings:

he svāmini vinodinī, nandīśvare yabe tumi,
nandāloye parama ānande
lalitā viśākhā sakhī, dui pārśve śobhā dekhi,
cāri dike yoto sakhīvṛnde

"O Svāmini! O Vinodini (source of Kṛṣṇa's pleasure)! When You go to Nandīśvara, the abode of Nanda, in topmost ecstasy, I see how beautiful You look when You are flanked by Your best friends Lalitā and Viśākhā and surrounded by all Your other girlfriends."

apūrva cāṅdera hāṭa, pathe kori koto nāṭa,
rasera prasaṅge yabe tumi.
patha śrānta dekhi tomā, o go Kṛṣṇa priyatamā
kaṭideśa dhari yābo āmi

"How many frivolous talks You have with them as You walk along the way, looking like a marketplace of moons! O Beloved of Kṛṣṇa! When I see that You become tired of walking I will hold Your waist."

colite colite pathe, patha śrānta dekhi rādhe,
śrī rūpa mañjarī devī kobe,
skandha avalambane, ānibe go sayatane,
paricarya kori koto bhāve

"O Rādhe! When I see that You become tired of walking I will serve You in so many ways, while You lean on the shoulder of Śrī Rūpa Mañjarī, who will carefully lead You onwards."

vraja patha kori ālā, gamana madhura līlā,
āra kobe hobe daraśana
kuñjeśvarī caraṇete, vinaye vinaye keṅde
dāsa gosvāmī kore nivedana.

"When will I see Your sweet pastime of illuminating Vraja's pathways? Śrīla Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī humbly cries and prays at the lotus feet of Śrī Rādhikā, the Queen of the *kuñjas*!"

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VERSE 60:

HAMVĀ-RAVAIR IHA GAVĀM API BALLABĀNĀṀ
KOLĀHALAIR VIVIDHA VANDI KALĀVATĀṀ TAIḤ
SAMBHRĀJATE PRIYATAYĀ VRAJARĀJA SŪNOR
GOVARDHANĀD API GURUR VRAJA VANDITĀD YAḤ

hamvā - mooing; *ravaiḥ* - sounds; *iha* - here; *gavām* - cows; *api* - even; *ballabānāṁ* - of the cowherders; *kolāhalaiḥ* - noises; *vividha* - different kinds; *vandi* - panegyrists; *kalāvatāṁ* - artists; *taiḥ* - by them; *sambhrājate* - shines fully; *priyatayā* - with love; *vraja rāja sūnoḥ* - of the prince of Vraja; *govardhanāt* - than Govardhana; *api* - even; *guruḥ* - greater; *vraja* - of Vraja; *vanditād* - worshiped; *yaḥ* - who.

Thus You arrive at Nandīśvara, the great abode of Nanda, the king of Vraja, which is filled with the bellowing of cows, the shouts of the cowherders and the different songs of panegyrists and artists, and which shines with love, being dearer to the prince of Vraja (Kṛṣṇa) than even Govardhana.

Explanations: In his *svarūpāveśa* Śrī Raghunātha dāsa relishes a stream of the flavour of devotional service. Svāminī goes to Nandīśvara, the abode of the king of Vraja and his son Śrī Kṛṣṇa. How dear this abode is to Svāminī! The cows are mooing and the whole town is filled with the sounds of cowherders, reciters and artists. This place is even greater than Govardhana Hill, which is praised by all the people of Vraja! The Nandīśvara Hill is always served by hundreds and hundreds of Amarāvatīs (the celestial abode of Indra). When Svāminī sees the hill, Her unrivalled sweetness and beauty wells up and gushes out with a hundred streams. How many hundreds of emotions are manifest in the embodiment of emotion! How sweet are the paces of Bhāvamayī and Her *sakhīs*! This picture is ever to be meditated upon by the devotees. The Mahājanas are singing:

sundarī sakhī saṅge korolo payāna
raṅga paṭāmbara, jhāṁpalo saba tanu,
kājare ujara nayāna

"Sundarī Rādhikā walks along with Her girlfriends. Her colorful silken *sārī* covers Her whole body and Her eyes are beautified by eyeliner."

daśanaka jyoti, moti naha samatula,
hasaite khase maṇi jāni
kāñcana kiraṇa, varaṇa naha samatula,
vacana jiniyā piku-vāṇī

"Even pearls cannot compare to the lustre of Her teeth and jewels fall out of Her mouth when She laughs. Golden rays cannot compare to Her bodily complexion and Her voice defeats that of the cuckoos."

kara padatala thala, kamala dalāruṇa,
mañjīra ruṇu jhunu bāja.

govinda dāsa koho, ramaṇī śiromaṇi,
jitala manamatha rāja

"Her handpalms and footsoles shine like red landlotus-petals and Her anklebells are jingling. Govinda dāsa says: "This crownjewel of women defeats even king Cupid!" Svāminī and Her friends now approach the town-gate (*gopura*) of Nandīśvara and the *sakhīs* show anxious Rādhikā that Śyāma, who is just as anxious, stands before the Gopura, playing with His friends after milking His cows. How eager the Lord is at heart to accept the loving service of His devotees! Only a devotee's heart can know how anxious the Supreme Brahman is! How sweet it is to think: "The Lord wants me!" In truth the Lord is Self-satisfied, accomplished in His desires, full of bliss, unagitated, and free from hankerings, but in His playful pastimes He is the enjoyer, who thirsts for happiness. Especially the love of the *gopīs* awakens unbridled desires in His heart, and ornaments Him with a beautiful dress with which He rambles from *kuñja* to *kuñja* with the *gopīs*. How many colored pictures His desires mark on the canvas of His heart! Rādhārāṇī is the greatest; He's so eagerly waiting to see Her. She is the presiding goddess of love, the embodiment of *mādanākhya mahā bhāva*. If even one drop of this love enters the vessel of the individual soul the Lord becomes so eager to have it! Śrī Nārāyaṇa, the Lord of Vaikuṇṭha, told Gopa Kumāra:

svāgataṁ svāgataṁ vatsa diṣṭyā diṣṭyā bhavān mayā; saṅgato'tra tvad īkṣāyāṁ ciram utkaṇṭhitenahi
bahūni gamitāny aṅga janmāni bhavatā sakhe; kathañcid api mayābhimukhyaṁ kiñcid akāri na
asminn asminn ihenaiva bhave bhāvī mad unmukhaḥ; ity āśayā tavātyantaṁ natito'smi sadājñavat
chalaṁca na labhe kiñcid yenādyaṁ paripālayan;
nibandhaṁ svakṛtaṁ bhrātarānayāmyātmanaḥ padaṁ
tatte mayyakṛpāṁ vīkṣya vyagro'nugraha kātaraḥ; anādiṁ setum ullaṅghya tvajjanmedam akārayam
śrīmad govardhane tasmin nija priyatamāspade; svayam evābhavaṁ tāta jayantyākhyāḥ sa te guruḥ
kāmaṁ dīrghatamaṁ me'dya cirāttvaṁ samapūrayaḥ;
svasya me'pi sukhaṁ puṣṇannatraiva nivasa sthiraḥ

(Bṛhad Bhāgavatāmṛtam 2.4.81-87)

"O my son! Welcome, welcome! I have been eager to see you for so many days! O friend! You have gone through many births, but still you did not show even the slightest interest in Me. In this birth you have turned towards Me, and hoping for this I have been constantly dancing like an ignorant person. O brother! I could not find any trick by which I could bring you here, violating the injunctions of the Vedas and so. O child! I was very upset that you ignored Me for so long. Being so eager for your mercy I violated the beginningless religious principles that were made by Myself and made you take birth near My own beloved Śrī Govardhana, while I descended there as your *guru*, named Jayanta. Today you have fulfilled My long-standing desires! Just stay here and increase My happiness and yours!" This shows how eager Lord Nārāyaṇa is to get every living entity to become His devotee. Gopa Kumāra saw that Lord Nārāyaṇa was very happy to see him indeed, but that His happiness was not so intolerable that He would faint. But when he met Śrī Kṛṣṇa in Vraja he saw that Kṛṣṇa did faint of ecstasy when He saw him. Gopa Kumāra told Jana Śarmā:

sva dīna loka priyatā niyantritā balād athotplutya samīpam āgataḥ
tad īkṣaṇa prema vimohitaṁ hi māṁ gale gṛhītvā sahasāpatad bhuvi

"I was overwhelmed by love when I saw Kṛṣṇa. Being controlled by feelings of love for this wretch He jumped up, came to me, held me around the neck and then fainted of ecstatic love and fell to the ground!" (Bṛhad Bhāgavatāmṛtam 2.6.60) Later, with the help of Śrī Baladeva

and Gopa Kumāra, Kṛṣṇa's loving swoon subsided. If Kṛṣṇa is so eager to get one devotee, then who can measure His eagerness to get *premamayī* Srī Rādhā?

bhajana is not beautiful as long as there are selfish desires. *bhajana* will be beautiful when the heart only seeks the happiness of the beloved deity. "I will see what He misses and how I can fill up that void." In this way expertise in *bhajana* will come. How much eagerness there is in each of Śyāma's limbs to relish this! It is winter and Svāminī has covered Her head with a veil. How wonderful is Her sweetness! Śrī Rūpa Mañjarī shows Svāminī the way and Tulasī follows. The devotee who is fixed in *smaraṇa* relishes the sweetness of these emotions. *bhajana* fails if the devotee does not stay with Svāminī and serves Her. Kundalatā shows Her: "O Rādhe! Look at that bluish aura by the towngate that destroys the patience of all the Vraja-*gopīs*!" Svāminī sees that Kṛṣṇa holds His left arm on the shoulder of His dearest friend Subala and He twirls a lotus flower around in His right hand. With this playlotus He also twirls the minds of the *gopīs* around! Śrīmatī is completely overwhelmed with ecstasy when She drinks the nectar of Kundalatā's words with the cups of Her ears, the nectarean vision of Kṛṣṇa with the cups of Her eyes and His nectarean fragrance with the cups of Her nostrils. When the *gopīs* pass through the Gopura they all shyly cover their faces, peeping through the holes of their veils with lowered eyes, trying to drink some of the nectarean sight of Priyatama's (dearmost Kṛṣṇa's) lotuslike face.

Śrīmatī thinks: "All-enchanting Kṛṣṇa stands here by the town gate only for Me!" Just to agitate Kṛṣṇa a little She slightly pulls the veil from Her head to show Her face to Him completely. It is as if She pulls at the veil of Śyāma's mind by doing that! How sweetly Her bangles are jingling! How beautifully Her jewelled rings are blazing on Her fingers, that defeat the luster of golden Campaka-buds! Śyāma gazes at Her without blinking! Waves of passion for Śyāma are playing in every level of Svāminī's heart, the hairs on Her body stand erect of joy, tears of love trickle from Her eyes and Her whole body shivers. She cannot walk on anymore, so She tells Lalitā: "Sakhi ! I cannot walk so fast ! There are big pebbles on the road!" Kundalatā jokingly asks: "Are these pebbles on the road or in Your mind, *sakhi*?" Śrī Rādhikā, the empress of spiritual sweetness, walks on. Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa's eyes meet Each other and Nāgara Kṛṣṇa becomes enchanted by it. Great streams of sweetness gush out of Śrīmatī's divine body and Śyāma stares at Her in complete absorption.[145] The object of His meditation has appeared before Him!

patha gati nayane milalo rādhā kāna; duhuṅ mane manasija pūralo sandhāna
duhuṅ mukha heraite duhuṅ bhelo bhora; samaya nā bujhato acatura cora
vidagadha saṅgiṇī saba rasa jāno; kuṭila nayane korolo sābadhāna

(Pada Kalpataru)

"As Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa's eyes met Each other down the road Cupid fulfilled Their minds' desires. They became absorbed in staring at Each other's faces. This clumsy thief (Kṛṣṇa) did not understand that this is not the right time and place, but the clever *sakhīs* know all mellows; they warned Him with their crooked glances."

Śrī Rūpa Mañjarī and Tulasī serve Svāminī day and night, according to the time. They are primarily interested in service, and relishing Svāminī's form, qualities and pastimes comes afterwards. They serve Her both in meeting and in separation from Kṛṣṇa. The *premika sevikā* always stays with Svāminī. First Svāminī must be loved, and then the sweetness of Her form, qualities and pastimes can be relished. The worship of Vraja is a worship of love, not a worship according to scriptural injunctions. It is a *bhajan* based on greed. Svāminī shyly asks Lalitā with trembling voice: "Sakhi! Is there no other way to go to the house of king Nanda? I cannot

[145] This pastime is described by Śrī Ānanda Gopāla Gosvāmī.

go along this road anymore!" Lalitā says: "Rādhe! Because You act on the order of Your superiors there will be no fault in You! You will not be blamed! Come *sakhi*, just go on over the main road!" Śrīmatī, very happy to hear Lalitā's clever encouragement, proceeds slowly but surely down the main road while the *sakhīs* and *mañjarīs* are swimming in oceans of nectarean *rasa* as they behold this scene. Beholding the beauty of the mountain, everyone walks on.
Śrī Haripada Śila sings:

vrajendra vasati sthala, kibā śobhā mahojjvala,
para pada nandīśvara nāma
vrajavāsī jana iṣṭa, govardhana hoite śreṣṭha,
gaurava maṇḍita divya dhāma.

"How splendid is the abode of the king of Vraja named Nandīśvara! It is even more popular amongst the Vrajavāsīs than Govardhana! This divine abode is decorated with glory."

dhenugaṇa hamvā-rave, vividha vandana gīte,
cāri veda dhvani madhumoy.
gopa gopī kolāhole, premānanda hāṭa mile,
nirantara mukharita hoy.

"There are constant sounds of mooing cows, different praises and songs, the honey-sweet sounds of the four Vedas, and ecstatic loving noises of the cowherders and cowherdesses."

kibā jāni ki mahimā, cintāmaṇi raja kaṇā,
vṛndā-devīra sājāna udyāna
śrī nanda nandana priya, ananta mahimāmoy,
nandīśvare ananta praṇāma.

"What do I know of the greatness of Nandīśvara, where the specks of dust are made of Cintāmaṇi-gems and the gardens are cultured by Vṛndādevī? I offer innumerable obeisances unto Nandīśvara, the abode whose glories are unlimited and which is so dear to Śrī Nanda-nandana!"

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VERSE 61:

PRĀPTĀṀ NIJA PRAṆAYINĪ PRAKARAIḤ PARĪTĀṀ
NANDĪŚVARAṀ VRAJA MAHENDRA MAHĀLAYAṀ TAM
DŪRE NIRĪKṢYA MUDITĀ TVARITAṀ DHANIṢṬHĀ
TVĀM ĀNAYIṢYATI KADĀ PRAṆAYAIR MAMĀGRE

prāptāṁ - attained; *nija* - own; *praṇayinī* - loving girlfriends; *prakaraiḥ* - with groups; *parītāṁ* - surrounded; *nandīśvaraṁ* - Nandīśvara; *vraja* - of Vraja; *mahā* - great; *indra* - king; *mahā* - great; *ālayaṁ* - abode; *taṁ* - him; *dūre* - in a distance; *nirīkṣya* - seeing; *muditā* - blissfully; *tvaritaṁ* - quickly; *dhaniṣṭhā* - Dhaniṣṭhā; *tvām* - You; *ānayiṣyati* - will bring; *kadā* - when; *praṇayaiḥ* - with love; *mama* - mine; *agre* - before.

When You arrive in Nandīśvara You are surrounded by Your loving friends. When will I then see Dhaniṣṭhā quickly and lovingly taking You inside in front of me, after she sees You coming from afar?

Explanations: Svāminī enters into the city of Vrajarāja. How beautiful is this city! Wherever you look, you see extraordinary architecture! This city is filled with a fountain that produces all delightful sweetness and beauty. Śrīmatī and Her girlfriends see:

sphaṭika ghaṭita kuḍyamīḍya bharmojjvala paṭalaṁ pavikīlakaṁ kabāṭam
maṇimaya lalanā dhṛta pradīpa vratati naga dvijarāji rājitad vā
dyumaṇi kiraṇa dīpta ratna-kumbha dhvaja naṭa keki vṛtāgra pauraṭāṭṭam
suravara pura ninda yatra śandaṁ vilasati mandira-vṛndam indirāḍhyam

"The walls of Nandīśvara are made of crystal, the roofs and gates of gold and jewels and the bolts of these gates of diamonds. Female statues made of jewels carry the chandeliers and birds of jewels sit up in jewelled trees that are entwined by vines made of jewels. The sunrays are reflected in the jewelled pots hanging over the veranda and many artificial peacocks are dancing on the flags on top of these pots. The abode of king Nanda defeats the abode of the heavenly king Indra in blissfulness and is full of regal opulence." (Kṛṣṇa Bhāvanāmṛta 5.48-49)

When Svāminī walks through the alleys of the town, She becomes more grave. Kṛṣṇa considers the jingling of Her anklebells to be like a stream of nectar entering into His ears. Śrī Rādhikā is the very life of Queen Yaśodā's maidservant Dhaniṣṭhā, who restlessly walks in and out of the palace, looking out for Her and thinking: "Why has Rādhikā not come yet?" When she finally sees Rādhikā coming in the distance, she quickly comes out, takes Her by the hand and asks Her: "Why are You so late? I was so distressed because of not seeing You!" Svāminī replies: "You know that I am controlled by My superiors!"[146] When Śrīmatī is led inside king Nanda's abode She illuminates the whole place with Her sweet effulgence. When Dhaniṣṭhā takes Rādhikā before queen Yaśodā, Yaśodā exclaims: "Aho! I understand that the goddess of beauty of all the three worlds has appeared within my house!"

rāire dekhiyā, umati hoiyā, yaśodā korolo kore
mukhāni dhariyā, cumbana korite, bhigālo nayāna lore
se ye rasavatī, korolo praṇati, yaśodā rohiṇī pāya

(Padakartā Rāya Śekhara)

"Yaśodā is in ecstasy when she sees Rāi and embraces Her, taking Her on her lap. She holds Her face and kisses Her while tears stream from her eyes. This Rasavatī Rāi then offers Her obeisances to the lotus feet of Mother Yaśodā and Rohiṇī."

Svāminī is a *bhakti-latā*, or vine of devotion. She bows down to Mother Yaśodā's feet, and mother lifts Her and holds Her to her chest, cuddling Her just as she would cuddle her son, by holding Her chin, looking at Her face, kissing Her and smelling Her head. It seems as if Svāminī melts of mother's pure parental love. Pressed at mother's breasts Svāminī says with tearfilled eyes and faltering voice: "Mā! I am yours!"

Of course, in fact all the *gopīs*, that are Kṛṣṇa's pleasure-potency, the Vrajavāsīs and everything else that exists belongs to Kṛṣṇa, but just to make His pastimes more exciting His

[146] This paragraph is narrated by Śrī Ānanda Gopāla Gosvāmī.

spiritual illusory potency Yogamāyā creates such situations for Him, in which He becomes the paramour of other men's wives. A woman is not hard to attain unless she lives in another man's house, unless she is hard to get there will be no obstacles, and unless there are obstacles there will be no astonishment in the blissful meeting of the loving pair. Although the *gopīs* are actually not other men's wives they appear to be like that just to increase Kṛṣṇa's pleasure and excitement. The marital status of the eternally perfect consorts of Śrī Kṛṣṇa is like a mirage or a dream, and Yogamāyā revealed that dream.[147] The married *gopīs* sit in the houses of their husbands, spending their days simply weeping, and whenever there is some slight opportunity there is a meeting with Kṛṣṇa. How blissful is that meeting! Govinda greatly yearns for that kind of delectable happiness, which is the quintessence of transcendental flavours. This is due to Yogamāyā's expertise.

mo viṣaye gopīgaṇera upapati bhāve; yogamāyā koribeka āpana prabhāve
āmiho nā jāni - nā jāne gopīgaṇa; doṅhāra rūpa guṇe doṅhāra nitya hare mana
dharma chāḍi rāge doṅhe koroye milana; kabhu mile kabhu nā mile- daivera ghaṭana
ei sab rasa niryāsa koribo āsvāda; ei dvāre koribo sarva bhaktera prasāda
vrajera nirmala rāga śuni bhakta-gaṇa; rāga mārge bhaje yeno chāḍi dharma karma

"The *gopīs* consider Me to be their paramour, due to the power of Yogamāyā. I don't know about it and the *gopīs* don't know it. We always steal Each other's minds with our forms and qualities. This passionate love causes us to give up religious principles and to meet Each other. Sometimes we meet, sometimes we don't meet - that's up to Fate. I will relish the quintessence of *rasa* and in this way I shall bless all the devotees. When they hear of the pure love of Vraja They will also worship Me on the path of *rāga bhakti*, giving up all social and religious principles." (Caitanya Caritāmṛta Ādi 4) Śrī Śuka Muni described the supreme astonishment of the extramarital love of the *gopīs* in the Rāsa-*līlā*, which is the crownjewel of all transcendental pastimes, as follows in Śrīmad Bhāgavata (10.33.36):

anugrahāya bhaktānāṁ mānuṣam deham āśritaḥ
bhajate tādṛśī krīḍā yā śrutvā tat-paro bhavet

"Out of compassion for all the devotees the Lord took shelter of a human form and performed such pastimes. Anyone who hears about this pastime will become devoted to Him." The Lord and the Vraja-sundarīs perform this pastime to delight and benefit Themselves, Their pleasure-potencies, Their associates in Vraja and indeed all the people of the world! Anyway, Mother Yaśodā, who is the embodiment of maternal love, sprinkles Svāminī with her tears of love and blesses Her, saying: *śaśimukhi! śaradāṁ śataṁ jayaivaṁ sukhaya mano nayane mamety uditvā* (Kṛṣṇa Bhāvanāmṛta 5,54) "O moonfaced girl! May You live for a hundred years and may You always delight my eyes and my mind!" The *sakhīs* and *mañjarīs* also bow down to mother's feet and Yaśodā also embraces and blesses them. Śrīmatī and Her friends look very beautiful when they wear garlands of *bhāva*-flowers coming from the vine of mother Yaśodā's parental love. Mother Yaśodā, her heart melting of affection, seats Rādhikā on the best sittingplace and has some of the best sweets brought. Svāminī bows Her head out of shyness when Yaśodā requests Her to eat the sweets, so Yaśodā leaves it up to Dhaniṣṭhā to serve Rādhikā Her meal and goes elsewhere to perform other duties. After Śrīmatī Rādhikā has eaten mother Yaśodā takes Her to the kitchen and says: "O Rādhe! You are the goddess of fortune Herself! You always glance mercifully on my house, so my storehouse is filled to the brim! There is no shortage of any ingredient in my unlimited storehouse! Whatever You need

[147] See the discussion between Vṛndā and Paurṇamāsī in Chapter 15 of the Pūrva Campūḥ of Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī's 'Gopāla Campūḥ'.

for cooking You can take!" Ullāsavatī Śrīmatī is very happy to get that order from Queen Yaśodā, so She starts cooking for Her dearmost Priyatama. Then the vision vanishes and Śrī Raghunātha dāsa prays: "When can I see You like this?" Falling on the bank of Rādhākuṇḍa he weeps, bathing his chest with his own tears.

vrajapura mahendra ye, nanda mahārāja se,
nandīśvare nandāloye tumi,
priya sahacarī saṅge, ḍubi nāma rasa raṅge,
gamana korile vinodinī.

dūra hoite dekhi tomā, ogo Kṛṣṇa priyatamā,
hṛṣṭa mone dhaniṣṭhā sundarī.
āgusari tvarā kori, ānibe tomāra pyārī,
sumaṅgala śaṅkha-dhvani kori.

"O Vinodini! When You and Your friends go to Nandīśvara, the abode of Nanda Mahārāja, the king of Vrajapura, absorbed in the blissful *rasa* of Kṛṣṇa's name, I see from a distance how beautiful Dhaniṣṭhā blissfully comes forward to take You inside. O Kṛṣṇa's beloved! At that time I will blow an auspicious conchshell!"

vrajeśvarī agra bhāge, dekhiyā tomāke sabe,
ānanda taraṅga boye yāy.
ārope darśana kore, dāsa gosvāmī aśru nīre,
vilāpa kusumāñjali gāya

"When I see You all coming before Queen Yaśodā I float on waves of ecstasy. While Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī sees this, he sings Vilāpa Kusumāñjali with tearfilled eyes."

.

VERSE 62:

PRAKṢĀLYA PĀDAKAMALE KUŚALE PRAVIṢṬĀ
NATVĀ VRAJEŚA MAHIṢĪ PRABHṚTĪ GURUS TĀḤ
HĀ KURVATĪ RASAVATĪṀ RASABHĀK KADĀ TVAṀ
SAṀMAJJAYIṢYASI KADĀ SUKHA SĀGARE MĀM

prakṣālya - having washed; *pāda* - feet; *kamale* - on the lotus; *kuśale* - O beautiful, auspicious girl!; *praviṣṭā* - entered; *natvā* - bowed down; *vrajeśa* - king of Vraja; *mahiṣī* - to the Queen; *prabhṛtī* - etc.; *guruḥ* - superior; *tāḥ* - she; *hā* - O!; *kurvatī* - does; *rasavatīṁ* - cooking; *rasabhāk* - anointed with perspiration after the work; *kadā* - when; *tvaṁ* - You; *saṁmajjayiṣyasi* - you immerse; *kadā* - when; *sukha* - bliss; *sāgare* - in the ocean: *mām* - me.

O Kuśale (beautiful, auspicious girl)! You are an expert cook! After I washed Your lotuslike feet You enter into the kitchen and offer Your

obeisances to the queen of Vraja (Yaśodā) and other superiors. When will You drown me in an ocean of bliss by doing this?

Explanations: In his *svarūpāveśa* Śrī Raghunātha has a vision of his devotional service and when the vision vanishes he prays: "Ayi Kuśale! O all-auspicious Svāmini! When will You enter the kitchen after washing Your feet and offering Your obeisances to Vrajeśvarī Yaśodā and other superiors?" The maidservant changes Śrīmatī's clothes and ornaments and dresses Her in clothes that are fit for use in the kitchen. Śrī Raghunātha clearly perceives this pastime. During visualization it appears as if it is directly happening, but after the vision subsides, one considers: "Oh, that wasn't real - it was just a vision!" Then with piteous cries one prays again. Then the meditation appears again as if it is directly happening. In this way the *līlā smaraṇa* gradually continues. When a sensitive devotee hears and recites this he will think: "Aho! Blessed is Śrī Dāsa Gosvāmī! He was totally free from bodily consciousness when he fell on the bank of Rādhākuṇḍa, the crownjewel of Vraja, and was blessed with the full vision of the greatly swelling sweetness of the Divine Couple, day and night! Will I ever attain even a single drop of this ocean of *bhāva*, by his grace? Śrī Kavi Karṇapura teaches in Alaṅkāra Kaustubha: *vibhāvayati utpādayatīti vibhāva* "A *vibhāva* causes the inherent desires for devotion to arise in the hearts of the devotees who have similar feelings (*sahṛdaya*). Although, perhaps, Śrī Dāsa Gosvāmī is not able to awaken his listeners' emotions to the same extent as his, he is still able to water the seeds in their hearts, making them fit for such desires to fructify in them. The more the devotees hear and read the words of Dāsa Gosvāmī, the more the seed of their potential *prema* will fructify and grow. This is the effect that *vibhāva* has on the listener.

āsi dāsīgaṇa, rādhāra caraṇa,
dhoyālo śītala nīre
ati sukomala, o-thala kamala,
muchā'lo pātala cīre
rohiṇī sahite, randhana korite,
bosilo rājāra jhi
sab sakhīgaṇa, yogāya yogāna,
śekhara yogāya ghi

"The maidservants came and washed Rādhā's lotus feet with cold water. They wiped Her feet that are very tender, like land-lotuses, with soft towels, and then this princess sat down with Rohiṇī to cook. All the *sakhīs* hand Her the ingredients and Rāy Śekhara hands Her the *ghī* (clarified butter)." Mother Rohiṇī also blesses Śrī Rādhā as if She is her own daughter, saying: *pacana caturatāratāsi jāte; pacamanasā tava bhāti yad yathā tat* (Kṛṣṇa Bhāvanāmṛta 5,61) "O daughter of mine! You are a very good cook, cook whatever You like!" Hearing mother Rohiṇī's words Svāminī shyly bows Her head down. The *kiṅkarīs* change Svāminī's regular dress and ornaments for a dress suitable for cooking. Affectionately mother Rohiṇī seats Śrīmatī close to the stove on a golden chair covered with a white sheet. The fire is burning on cedar, aloe and pinewood and all the ingredients are lying before Svāminī, handed to Her by a maidservant whenever She needs any.

jvalana kalana pātra dhāraṇonnaty avanati mūrchhana darvi cālanādyaiḥ
trivali kuca bhujāṁsa kampa celoccalana vaśād udapādi yas tad āsyāḥ

(Kṛṣṇa Bhāvanāmṛta 5.64)

"Sometimes Svāminī checks whether the fire is burning well or not, sometimes She lifts the lid from the cookingpot to see if the preparation is cooked, sometimes She adds some spices and sometimes She stirs the preparation with a spoon. While She does that Her three-lined belly, breasts, arms and shoulders are moving along and cause Her to shine constantly with matchless sweetness."

Tulasī says: "You are Rasavatī, an expert cook, or a girl full of spiritual flavour, and now You plunge me into an ocean of bliss, filling up the whole kitchen with spiritual flavour also!" What is so spiritually relishable in that kitchen then? Śyāmasundara finished His bath and had Himself dressed and now He sits down in His *bhajan kuṭīra* (meditation room) to repeat the name of Rādhā and to meditate on the Rādhā-*mantra.* His mother and father had Him initiated into Nārāyaṇa-*mantra* by Bhāgurī Muni. For Gopāla's own benefit, mother Yaśodā says: "Go Gopāla! Practise Your *mantra* in Your *bhajan kuṭīra*!" Kṛṣṇa sits down and thinks: "Whose *mantra* shall I practise?"[148] *āmā hoite gunī boḍo jagata asambhava; ekāli rādhāte tāhā kori anubhava* (C.C. Ādi 4, 241)–"No one in the world can possibly be more qualified than Me. I only experience that in Śrī Rādhā!" Therefore He meditates on Śrī Rādhā, His eternally beloved goddess! Śrīpāda Prabodhānanda Sarasvatī writes (Rādhā Rasa Sudhānidhi 96): *kālindī taṭa kuñja mandira gato yogīndravat yad pada jyotir dhyāna parā sadā japati yam premāśru pūrṇo hariḥ* "With His eyes filled with tears of love, Lord Hari always repeats the two most tasteful syllables 'Rā-dhā' and meditates on the spiritual effulgence of Her lotus feet like the king of *yogīs* in a temple in a *kuñja* on the bank of the Yamunā."

sakhi! rādhā nāma kevā śunāile;
śuni mora prāṇa juḍāile
ei nāme āche ki mādhurī;
śravaṇe rahalo sudhā bhari
koto nāma āchaye gokule;
heno hiyā nā kore ākule
cite niti mūrati vikāsa;
amiyā sāgare yeno vāsa
dekhite nayane lāge sādha;
e yadunandana mana kānd

"*sakhi*! Who told Me this name Rādhā? Hearing it I felt My heart was soothed! How much sweetness is there in that name? It filled My ears with nectar! How many names aren't there in Gokula? None of them agitated Me like this one! When Her form manifests itself in My heart it is as if I reside in an ocean of nectar!" Yadunandana's mind weeps: "When I see Her My eyes are fulfilled!"

No other consort is so fortunate! Kṛṣṇa can forget everything, but not Her! This is the Lord we worship! He is *līlā vilāsī,* a playful enjoyer. The killing of demons and other worldly duties are performed by Lord Viṣṇu. He performs these duties through Kṛṣṇa's hands. *Kṛṣṇa kore viṣṇu dvāre asura saṁhāra* (Caitanya Caritāmṛta). He is the carefree Dhīra Lalita-hero, enjoying in every *kuñja* with Śrī Rādhā. Playing and playing, He infuses His *prema* in the trees and vines. He revives the old and dry trees and causes the rocks to melt with His flutesong. We will not see our worshipable Lord outside of His pastimes. In the Gambhīrā Śrīman Mahāprabhu embraced Śrī Svarūpa Dāmodara and Śrī Rāmānanda Rāya and wept. His heart, that was burning in the fire of love-in-separation, was soothed by the cooling nectar of suitable songs and verses from Kṛṣṇa Karṇāmṛta, Gīta Govinda, Caṇḍīdāsa and Vidyāpati that were sung to Him by Svarūpa and Rāma Rāya.

[148] Narrated by Śrī Ānanda Gopāla Gosvāmī.

caṇḍī dāsa vidyāpati, rāyera nāṭaka gīti, karṇāmṛta śrī gīta govinda
svarūpa rāmānanda sane, mahāprabhu rātri dine, gāya śune parama ānanda

(Caitanya Caritāmṛta)

"Day and night Mahāprabhu was most blissfully singing and hearing the songs of Caṇḍīdāsa and Vidyāpati, the songs from Rāmānanda Rāya's play, and the verses of Kṛṣṇa Karṇāmṛta and Śrī Gīta Govinda, together with Svarūpa Dāmodara and Rāmānanda Rāya." Mahārāja Pratāparudra attained the Lord's mercy by reciting the verses of the Gopī Gītā[149] to Him. The Lord relished this Himself and also taught all the devotees of the world that Gopījanavallabha Śrī Govinda is our worshipable deity.

While practising this meditation in His *bhajan kuṭīra* Kṛṣṇa becomes eager to see the object of that contemplation, so He goes to the kitchen. When He peeps through the kitchen-window He sees Śrīmatī cooking there. Aha! Such sweetness! She does not have Her veil on straight, and Her dress and ornaments are loosened because of the hard work. Her face shines with a reddish glow because of the nearby burning fire and Her cheeks are beautified by pearl-like sweatdrops. Śyāma can not move His feet anymore as He beholds the object of His meditation. *pādau padam na calatas tava pādamūlāt*[150], in such a condition. His eyes are widened of ecstasy from seeing Her. Suddenly Svāmini sees Śyāma. Out of shyness She cannot pull the veil on Her head straight and She gives a wink to Tulasī to pull Her veil back over Her head. Then She chastises Tulasī with a blink from Her eyes: "Tulasi, didn't you see Him? Why didn't you tell Me He is watching Me?" Tulasī replies with her eyes: "I also didn't see Him, I was absorbed in grinding paste!" Actually Tulasī had seen Kṛṣṇa before, but our Hero had silently requested her not to tell Svāminī that He was watching Her. Rādhikā's and Śyāma's eyes meet and with Her glances Svāminī lets Kṛṣṇa know: "Mā Rohiṇī is here, go now!" Kṛṣṇa asks with His eyes: "Will I not see You anymore?" Svāminī blinks: "Yes!" Our hero is enchanted by Her arrow-like glances and thinks: "Aha! How much trouble She's taking to cook for Me! Her face has gotten a reddish glow from being close to the fire! Her maidervants are wiping Her face, that is adorned with sweatdrops!" How sweet is this exchange of Rādhikā's and Mādhava's glances! It fills the kitchen up with spiritual flavour and thus makes it a true Rasavatī.[151]

Śrī Haripada Śila sings:

he rādhe kibā śobhā, tribhuvana manalobhā,
vrajarāja nandera aṅgane
prāṇa koṭi premāspada, tomāra cañcala pada,
gandha jale kori prakṣālaṇe

"O Rādhe! How beautiful are Your restless feet as they step on the courtyard of Nanda, the king of Vraja! They are enchanting the three worlds and they are more lovable than millions of lives! I will wash them with scented water!"

vrajendra gṛhiṇī āra, guruvarga parivāra,
namaskāra koriyā sabāya.
sumaṅgala āśīrvāde, priya sahacarī sāthe,
praveśibe randhana śālāya

[149] Śrīmad Bhāgavata Canto 10, Chapter 31.

[150] Śrīmad Bhāgavata 10.29.34.

[151] Narrated by Śrī Ānanda Gopāla Gosvāmī.

"When You offer Your obeisances to the Queen of Vraja (Yaśodā) and all the other superiors, they give You auspicious blessings and then You enter into the kitchen with Your beloved girlfriends."

vicitra randhana śālā, padārpane kori ālā,
śrī aṅge gandhete gandhamoy
Kṛṣṇa sukha manovṛtti, yoto gopī tāra mūrti,
cāṅdera hāṭa bosilo tathāy

"The amazing kitchen is illuminated by Your footsteps and pervaded by the fragrance of Your beautiful body. All the *gopīs,* who are the embodiments of Kṛṣṇa's blissful desires, are sitting down there like a marketplace of moons."

pāka kārye sunipuṇa, tumi Kṛṣṇa priyatamā,
govindera bhojya upacāra.
catur vidha paramānna, ruci jāni bhinna bhinna,
randhanete ānanda apāra

"O Kṛṣṇa's beloved! You are very expert in cooking the ingredients for Kṛṣṇa's meal! In boundless bliss You are cooking four different kinds of sweet rice, knowing that Govinda has different tastes."

sevāra sāmagri dekhi, chala chala duṭi āṅkhi,
giridhārī koriyā smaraṇa.
romāñcita kalevara, mukhe vākya nāhi sphure,
dekhibo ki se candra vadana

"While both Your eyes look at the ingredients for cooking, You actually remember Giridhārī. When will I see Your moonlike face unable to speak a word while Your body is studded with goosepimples of ecstasy?"

he devi he sukumāri, saṅgete thākiyā pyārī,
anukūlya koriyā vidhāna.
vilāsa cāturya yoto, dekhibo ki āmi nitya,
sukha sāyare ho'ye nimagana.

"O Devi, O Sukumāri (tender girl)! Then I will arrange a favorable situation for You to meet Your beloved! Will I always be immersed in an ocean of bliss by witnessing Your clever pastimes?"

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VERSE 63:

MĀDHAVĀYA NATAVAKTRAM ĀDṚTĀ BHOJYAPEYA RASASAÑCAYAṀ KRAMĀT TANVATĪ TVAM IHA ROHIṆĪ KARE DEVI PHULLA-VADANAṀ KADEKṢYASE

mādhavāya - unto Mādhava; *nata* - lowered; *vaktram* - face; *ādṛta* - out of respect; *bhojya* - eatables; *peya* - drinks; *rasa* - nectar; *sañcayaṁ* - collects; *kramāt* - gradually; *tanvatī* - gives; *tvam* - You; *iha* - here; *rohiṇī* - Rohiṇī; *kare* - in the hand; *devi* - O goddess; *phulla* - blooming; *vadanaṁ* - face; *kadā* - when; *īkṣyase* - I will see.

O Devi, when can I see Your lowered blushing face affectionately looking at Mādhava while You collect all His food and drinks and place them in Rohiṇī's hands?

Explanations: In the previous verse it was described how Rādhā and Śyāma felt boundless bliss when They saw Each other in the kitchen. In this way even the kitchen had become a Rasavatī, a delicious place. "When will You thus fully immerse me in an ocean of bliss?" The devotee thinks: "I want to become happy by making You happy!" Everyone in the world wants to be happy, and even in the pure loving devotees some extremely subtle desire for personal happiness dwells. Only the maidservants of Śrī Rādhā are completely free from this. They are the summit of selflessness. The Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas practise the *upāsanā* of Rādhā-*dāsya*. The practising devotee should advance by thinking: "What will make Them (Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa) happy? *bhajan* can not take place as long as there is the stain of personal desire. While doing *bhajan* it is not easy to give up the desire for distinction. Why would *sādhu prema* (beautiful love) come in the heart where the dog-eating woman of the desire for distinction still dwells? One should fear the desire for distinction, as Śrīpāda Mādhavendra Puri did. *pratiṣṭhāra bhaye puri gelā palāiyā; kṛṣṇa-prema saṅge pratiṣṭhā cole lāgo loiyā* (C.C.) "Mādhavendra Puri fled out of fear of distinction, but reputation automatically comes along with a lover of Kṛṣṇa." A devotee who still has personal desires cannot possibly fathom the ecstasy there is in selfless worship. In selfish worship there is misery, and as long as there is still a whiff of desire the true joy of devotion cannot be attained.

After Svāminī finishes cooking She takes rest. The *kiṅkarīs* change Her clothes, wipe Her hands, feet and body with a wet towel and begin to fan Her while Dhaniṣṭhā brings a glass of syrup, saying: "Priyasakhi, drink a glass of syrup mixed with nectar!" While Svāminī enjoys the drink She closes Her eyes. Then the *kiṅkarīs* serve Her a *pān*. Meanwhile everyone sits down to eat. Svāminī pulls Her veil over Her forehead and hands mother Rohiṇī the different dishes meant to be served from the storehouse. Kṛṣṇa is enchanted as soon as He sees Svāminī and mother Yaśodā becomes worried when she sees that He seemingly loses His appetite.[152]

rāmera jananī, dichen āpani,
rādhikā rāndhilā yoto,
sugandhi odana, vividha vyañjana,
tāhā vā kohibo koto

"How can I describe all the different dishes mother Rohiṇī and Rādhikā have cooked? Look at that fragrant rice and these vegetable-preparations!"

vidhi agocara, yoto upahāra,
dichena rohiṇī māy
rādhāra vadana, dekhi acetana,
hoilā nāgara rāy

"Even the Creator cannot imagine how many dishes Mother Rohiṇī is serving! I see that Nāgara Rāya (Kṛṣṇa) has fainted after seeing Rādhā's face!"

aruci dekhiyā, ākula hoiyā,

[152] This explanation is by Śrī Ānanda Gopāla Gosvāmī.

kohoye nandera rāṇī,
rādhā rasavatī, karpūra mālatī,
tomāra lāgiyā āni

"Nandarāṇī Yaśodā becomes very upset when she sees Kṛṣṇa's lack of appetite, so she says: "Rasika Rādhā has brought camphor and Mālatī for You!"

tumi nā khāile, rāi nā āsibe,
svarūpa kohilām tore,
viśākhā lalitā, āra kundalatā,
ṭhāriyā kohiche more

"I tell You truly, if You don't eat Rāi will not come anymore! Viśākhā, Lalitā and Kundalatā have hinted that to me!"

māyera vacane, pāolo cetana,
nāgara śekhara kān
rāiye sukha diyā, ākaṇṭha pūriyā,
korolo bhojana pān

(Padakartā Rāya Śekhara)

"When Nāgara Śekhara, Kṛṣṇa, the king of amorous heroes, hears these words of His mother, He fills Himself upto the neck with food and drinks, just to please Rāi."

Svāminī enters the dining room, Her head lowered out of shyness. Balarāma and mother Yaśodā are there, after all. Śrīmatī blushes out of shyness and She tries to make Her bangles and anklebells jingle as softly as possible while She brings the full dishes in and takes the empty dishes back out again. Her pace is as nectarean as the dishes that She brings in! How carefully She carries Śyāmasundara's dishes![153] *rasa sañcaya* means: She serves *rasa*, spiritual flavours. The dishes of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, Subala, the *sakhīs* and *mañjarīs* taste of amorous love, and the dishes of Balarāma, Rohiṇī and Yaśodā taste of fraternal and parental love. What a wonderful meal!

rohiṇī-nandana, koroye bhojana,
kānura ḍāhine bosi,
vāmete subala, sammukhe maṅgala,
saghane uṭhaye hāsi

Rohiṇī-nandana Balarāma sits on Kṛṣṇa's right, Subala sits on His left and Madhumaṅgala faces Him as He eats. Yaśodā points at the different dishes with her index finger and says: "O Son! This preparation is very nice, that one is so tasty, this one is very sweet!" The expert joker Madhumaṅgala, seeing Kṛṣṇa's weak appetite, tells queen Yaśodā: "Mā! Kṛṣṇa doesn't eat anything! Just give Him some light food, like rice and *sabjī*, and give me the rich food cooked in *ghī*! I will nourish Him by embracing Him after I filled up my own belly!" Everyone laughs after hearing Madhumaṅgala's joking words while Mādhava relishes a new infusion of sweet flavours while viewing Rādhikā's face. Śrī Rādhā's face is blossoming - *phulla vadanam*. Svāminī is known as Maryādāvatī, a girl who neatly follows the etiquette. All the superiors are present, but still, can She survive without glancing at least slightly at

[153] The last paragraph is explained by Śrī Ānanda Gopāla Gosvāmī. Śrī Baṅgabihārī Vidyālaṅkāra says: *he devi kṛṣṇa manoharana pariveṣana krīḍāvati* "Devi means playful girl, a girl who playfully enchants Kṛṣṇa in the way She serves the meal."

Mādhava? All Her activities are aimed at Mādhava's satisfaction. Mādhava means the Lord (*dhava*) of all limitless beauty (*mā* or Śrī). The palace of *rasa* (spiritual flavours) is built on the foundation of *tattva* (spiritual truth). She is the root energy of the Original Person, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the fountainhead of all consorts of the Lord. Caitanya Caritāmṛta (Ādi 4) states:

Kṛṣṇa kāntā-gaṇa dekhi trividha prakāra; eka lakṣmī-gaṇa, pure mahiṣīgaṇa āra
vrajāṅganā-rūpa āra kāntā-gaṇa sāra; śrī rādhikā hoite kāntā-gaṇera vistāra
avatārī Kṛṣṇa yaiche kore avatāra; aṁśinī rādhā hoite tin gaṇera vistāra
lakṣmī-gaṇa tāra vaibhava vilāsāṁśa rūpa; mahiṣī-gaṇa vaibhava prakāśa svarūpa
ākāra svabhāva bhede vrajadevī-gaṇa; kāya vyūha-rūpa tāra rasera kāraṇa
bahu kāntā vinā nahe rasera ullāsa; līlāra sahāya lāgi bahut prakāśa
tāra madhye vraje nānā bhāva rasa-bhede; Kṛṣṇake korāya rāsādika līlāsvāda

"There are three kinds of consorts of Kṛṣṇa: Firstly, the goddesses of fortune, and then the Queens of Dvārakā. The greatest consorts, though, are the Vraja-*gopīs*. All these consorts emanate from Śrī Rādhikā. Just as all the Lord's descensions emanate from Kṛṣṇa, all the Lord's consorts emanate from Śrī Rādhā, their original source. The goddesses of fortune emanate from Her *vaibhava vilāsa* (manifestation of prowess) and the Queens belong to the *vaibhava prakāśa*-group (meaning about the same). There are differences in the Vraja-*gopīs*' forms and natures. They are the phalanx of Rādhā and they are the cause of transcendental flavours. Without the presence of many lovers there can be no *rasika* bliss, therefore there are many *gopīs* who are helping Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa in Their pastimes. In Vraja they have different moods and flavours, and they make Kṛṣṇa relish the flavours of pastimes like the Rāsa-*līlā*."

Or: Mā means 'beauty', and Kṛṣṇa is Her Lord (*dhava*), the abode of limitless beauty and sweetness. A flood awakens on the ocean of sweetness when Śrī Rādhā is seen and Rādhikā's maidservants relish that sight. They nourish Each others beauty; that's why Śrī Rādhā is addressed as *devi*. The most beautiful and effulgent One, *dyotamānā paramā sundarī*. With some trick Śyāmasundara is able to look at Svāminī without being noticed by others. Svāminī also blinks at Śyāma's sweet face while She hands the plates to mother Rohiṇī, thinking: "How beautiful is My Priyatama!" After eating one sweet, Śyāmasundara says: "Mā! This sweet is amazing!" At that time mother Rohiṇī is serving elsewhere, so mother Yaśodā says: "Rādhe! Bring that *sandeśa* here!" Svāminī brings it and mother Yaśodā says: "Come, give it to Him!" Just as Svāminī shyly wants to put the sweet on Kṛṣṇa's plate Kṛṣṇa stretches out His opened hand to receive it from Her. That is a sign of affection and Śrīmatī blushes of shyness when He does that. How beautiful is Her shyly blushing, blooming face at that time![154] Tulasī relishes this sweetness and greatly desires to see that blossoming lotusface again.

he rādhe icchāmata, sevāra sāmagrī yoto,
nija kare prastuta koriyā.
carvya coṣya lehya peya, paramānna yebā hoy,
ratana thālāte sājāiyā.

"O Rādhe! According to Your own wish You prepare Kṛṣṇa's dishes, like sweet rice that can be chewed, sucked, licked or drunk, with Your own hands and place them on jewelled plates."

rohiṇī devīra kare, dibe tumi aśru nīre,
prati padera nāmaṭī koriyā.
rasera pasarā dekhi, sabāra jhuribe āṅkhi,
ānandete aṅga elāiyā.

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[154] Apart from the quotations the entire purport is by Śrī Ānanda Gopāla Gosvāmī.

"With tearfilled eyes You hand these plates to Rohiṇī-devī, while singing Kṛṣṇa's name at every step. Everyone's eyes will be pleased by seeing such a lot of delicious dishes and everyone's bodies will be startled by ecstasy."

ei rūpe nava gaurī, dekhibo nayāna bhori,
candra koṭī praphulla vadana.
vilāpa kusumāñjali, bhajana sampad keli,
rasika mānasa rasāyana.

"In this way, O Nava Gauri (fresh golden beauty), I will fill up my eyes with the vision of Your face, that blooms (shines) like millions of moons. Vilāpa Kusumāñjali is the treasure of worship and the elixir for the minds of the *rasikas* !" (Śrī Haripada Śila)

.

VERSE 64:

BHOJANE GURU SABHĀSU KATHAÑCIN
MĀDHAVENA NATADṚṢṬI MADOTKAM
VĪKṢYAMĀNAM IHA TE MUKHAPADMAṀ
MODAYIṢYASI KADĀ MADHURE MĀM

bhojane - in eating; *guru* - of superiors; *sabhāsu* - in the assembly: *kathañcit* - somehow; *mādhavena* - by Mādhava; *nata* - lowered; *dṛṣṭi* - glance; *mada* - joyful; *utkam* - eager; *vīkṣyamāṇām* - being seen; *iha* - here; *te* - Your; *mukha* - face; *padmaṁ* - lotus; *modayiṣyasi* - you will gladden; *kadā* - when; *madhure* - O Sweet girl!; *mām* - me.

O Madhure (sweet girl)! When will You gladden me when I see Mādhava glancing at Your joyful and eager lotusface with lowered eyes as He sits in the dining room with His superiors?

Explanations: Ayi Madhure! O Sweet Girl! How beautiful You are when You are seen by Mādhava in the assembly of superiors! Svāminī is serving through the hands of mother Rohiṇī. Mother Yaśodā is there, Baladeva-candra is there, but somehow Śyāmasundara is catching a glimpse of Her. He cannot freely gaze at Her, but if He looks at Svāminī's face just once He can understand how eager She is.

rādhikāra hasta sparśe sarvānna vyañjana; bhojane korena Kṛṣṇa amṛta āsvādane
svādu pāiyā nija netra bhṛṅga pāṭhāiyā; rāi mukha padma madhu piye hṛṣṭa hoiyā
rādhikāho nija netra kaṭākṣa praṇālī; pāṭhāiyā piye Kṛṣṇa lāvaṇya sakali
Kṛṣṇa mukha mādhurimā dekhi suvadani; hariṣe vyākula citte kichui nā jāni

(Padakartā Śrīla Yadunandana Ṭhākura)

"Kṛṣṇa relishes the rice and vegetables cooked by Rādhikā like nectar and He blissfully sends His bee-like eyes out to drink the honey of Rāi's lotuslike face. Śrī Rādhikā also sends

the drains of Her glances out to catch the nectar of Kṛṣṇa's beauty. Seeing the sweetness of Kṛṣṇa's face fair-faced Rāi doesn't know anything anymore out of blissful eagerness!"

How eager Svāminī is after Śyāma's slight glance! *madotkam. harṣena utsukam*. Svāminī's face is stamped with eagerness. In his transcendental vision Śrī Raghunātha relishes that blissful eagerness on Her lotuslike face. When the practising devotees follow in the footsteps of the *ācāryas* they can also relish the sweetness of Svāminī's face in their meditations. In deep meditation the vicinity of the beloved deity is vividly experienced. The devotee will no longer think: "I am practising *smaraṇa*". Great anxiety for the direct meeting with the beloved deity will arise in the heart of a devotee whose meditation ends. The more he relishes, the more anxious he will be for more. It is not proper to feel satisfied after a little experience has come. The more one's thirst and eagerness increases, the closer the final attainment of the deity will come. How eager Śrī Rūpa and Raghunātha are! It is as if their chests (hearts) are breaking! When the birds and animals on the bank of Rādhākuṇḍa hear Śrī Raghunātha anxiously crying out of separation, they all cry along, making it known that they are feeling the same pain! Visions (*sphūrtis*) are more relishable than *smaraṇa*, meditations or dreams. During visions the experience is quite vivid. The beloved can be seen through the eyes and the meditation can be realized with closed eyes. When Śrīla Bilvamaṅgala Ṭhākura came to Vṛndāvana he saw Kṛṣṇa wherever he cast his glance. He went up to Him to catch Him, but then he understood - it was not a direct meeting, it was a vision. How clear were his visions!

mauliś candraka bhūṣaṇo marakata stambhābhirāmaṁ vapur
vaktraṁ citra vimugdha hāsa madhuraṁ bāle vilole dṛśau
vācaḥ śaiśava śītalā mada gaja ślāghyā vilāsa sthitir
mandaṁ mandam aye ka eṣa mathurā vīthīṁ mitho gāhate

"Who is that, playfully and slowly entering Mathurā (Vṛndāvana) over the road like an intoxicated elephant, wearing a crest of peacockfeathers, His body as enchanting as an emerald pillar, an enchanting smile on His face, casting playful, wanton glances with His restless eyes, and speaking words that are cooled off by adolescence?" (Śrī Kṛṣṇa Karnāmṛta - 57) Although from this it seems that Bilvamangala saw Kṛṣṇa, this was not a natural view - it was the end of a vision! A practising devotee who is fixed in *bhajan* will also get slight experiences like this. Bhajan will make a new life for him! He can test himself. Svāminī will certainly respond to someone's strong and powerful *bhajan*. She will come close and accept his devotional service. She is the boundless ocean of compassion, endowed with a lovely nature. She is the wish-yielding vine for the devotees. Śrīpāda Prabodhānanda Sarasvatī has written:

mañju svabhāvam adhi kalpalatā nikuñjaṁ vyanjantam adbhuta kṛpā rasa puñjam eva
premāmṛtāmbudhim agādham avādham etaṁ rādhābhidhaṁ drutam upāśraya sādhu cetaḥ

(Rādhā Rasa Sudhānidhi 28)

"O saintly mind! Quickly take shelter of sweet natured Rādhā, Who is like a grove full of wishyielding vines, Who reveals a wonderful abundance of powerful *rasika* compassion, and Who is a deep and unbridled nectar-ocean of love!" For attaining Her there is *sādhana bhajana*, for attaining Her we take shelter of a *guru*. At heart the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas always cry for Rādhārāṇī. *hema gauri tanu rāi, āṅkhi daraśana cāi, rodana koribo abhilāṣe* (Prema Bhakti Candrikā). "My eyes desire to see the golden formed Rādhikā, and I cry out of that desire!"

Normally we taste six flavours when we eat (sweet, sour, salty, bitter etc.) but now there is a seventh flavour, the flavour of spiritual eros infused in the food that Śrī Rādhikā serves to Śrī Kṛṣṇa. The *sakhīs* and maidservants can also relish that flavour. Kṛṣṇa is *akhila rasāmṛta*

mūrti, the embodiment of all transcendental nectarean flavours, and *rasarāja*, the king of flavours, and everybody relishes Him in their own way. In Śrīmad Bhāgavata (in the verse *mallānām aśaniḥ*, 10.43.17) it is described that when Kṛṣṇa entered into Kaṁsa's arena in Mathurā all the spectators saw Him according to their own mood and consciousness. In his commentary on this verse Śrīpāda Śrīdhara Svāmī has written*: tatra ca śṛṅgārādi sarva rasakadamba mūrtir bhagavān tat tad abhiprāyānusārena vabhau na sākalyena sarveṣām ityāha mallānām iti* "The different people saw Kṛṣṇa according to their own mood, desire, opinion and eligibility, but no one could see Him as the embodiment of all the different transcendental flavours, like the erotic flavour."

Svāminī has placed all the tasty dishes in Mother Rohiṇī's hands. How wonderful are the movements of Her hands! Śyāmasundara is absorbed! He relished Svāminī's inner feelings. How eager He is to have Her! It is said *te mukha-padmaṁ*, Your lotusface. Mādhava's eyes are like bumblebees. Restlessly, these thirsty bees drink the nectar of Svāminī's lotuslike face. There is not much time for Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa to glance at Each other, but somehow They find some consolation by blinking at Each other for a while with lowered faces. In that one second They drink all the honey from Each other's lotuslike faces with Their bee-like eyes. The relish of the honey of Their lotuseyes is included in the relish of the honey of Their lotuslike faces. While Their four eyes meet Kṛṣṇa prays to Svāminī (for love and another blissful meeting). Svāminī reciprocates by consoling Kṛṣṇa with a tiny glance. Kṛṣṇa had lost His appetite out of anxiety, but after having been consoled He begins to eat again. Svāminī has pacified Him. Daujī Mahārāja (Balarāma) does not notice it, Śyāma managed to deceive Him and mother Yaśodā, secretly looking at Svāminī. What a wonderful deluge of sweetness! Svāminī has pacified Śyāma's heart by consoling Him. The *ācāryas* aim at the meeting of Rādhā-Mādhava, because then they can attain Their long-desired devotional service.

yugala caraṇa sevā, yugala caraṇa dhyevā,
yugalei manera pirīti.
yugala kiśora rūpa, kāma rati gaṇa bhūpa,
mane rahu o-līlā ki rīti

(Prema Bhakti Candrikā)

"May the devotional service of the Yugala's lotus feet remain on my mind. May I meditate on Their feet and may my mind love this Yugala Kiśora, that are the monarchs over all Cupids and Ratis!"

vīkṣyamānam iha te mukha-padmaṁ "I want to see all the tricks Kṛṣṇa uses to see You, even in the assembly of His superiors!" Śrī Raghunātha says: "O Madhure (sweet girl)! Your cheeks start to blossom like a lotus flower in a river when they experience the touch of the sunrays of Mādhava's glance! We will see it and understand it all! You cannot hide anything from us!" None of Rādhā and Mādhava's secrets will remain hidden from those who understand the power of Their ecstatic love. This is how wonderful the love of the *mañjarīs* is! Before Rādhikā and Mādhava meet, these *dāsīs* know in which *kuñja* Their pastimes will take place and they will decorate that place before Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa arrive there. There will be no limit to Tulasī's ecstasy when the Yugala meets under four eyes![155]
Śrī Haripada Śila sings:

vrajendra vasati sthāna, divya cintāmaṇi dhāma,
bhojana mandira manohara
padmarāga ratna khani, māṇikyera ki gāṅthani,
jhalamola kore nirantara.

[155] The explanation of verse 64 is narrated by Śrī Ānanda Gopāla Gosvāmī.

"The abode of the king of Vraja is made of divine Cintāmaṇi-gems and the enchanting diningroom is made of stones from a mine of rubies that are constantly shining."

mandire ratana vedi, divya ratnāsana tathi,
padmera parāga ācchādana
vicitra āsana'pori, sakhā saṅge giridhārī,
bosilen korite bhojana

"In that diningroom is a jewelled platform with a divine jewelled chair on it, covered with lotuspollen. Giridhārī and His friends are sitting on that wonderful seat to take their meal."

subala śrīdāma vāme, dakṣiṇe śrī balarāme,
madhumaṅgala madhura prakṛti.
guruvarga cāri dhāre, cāṅdera hāṭa śobhā kore,
pariveṣana kore yaśomatī.

"Subala and Śrīdāma sit on Kṛṣṇa's left and Śrī Balarāma sits on His right with the sweet-natured Madhumaṅgala, while His superiors surround Him on all sides, looking as beautiful as a marketplace of moons as Yaśomatī serves *prasāda*."

catur vidha paramānna, āsvādane bhinna bhinna,
mugdha rasikendra cuḍāmaṇi,
prati pade padma-gandha, bhojane paramānande,
sudhā sāra svādu śikhariṇī

"Rasikendra Cuḍāmaṇi (Kṛṣṇa, the crownjewel of relishers) is enchanted while relishing the four different kinds of sweet rice and He is most ecstatic when He enjoys the Śikhariṇī-drink, that is more tasty than the essence of nectar and that smells of lotus flowers at every step."

nata dṛṣṭipāta kori, rāi mukha padma heri,
ullāsete madana mohana
nija netra bhṛṅga dvāre, jānāicho bāre bāre,
ki vicitra tomāra randhana.

"Madana Mohana is very happy to cast a lowered glance at Rāi's lotusface, and through His bee-like eyes (that drink the honey from that lotuslike face) He tells Her again and again: "How wonderful is Your cooking!"

Kṛṣṇa mukha mādhurimā, dekhi Kṛṣṇa priyatamā,
vallabhera bhojana vilāsa
bhāvera taraṅgāvali, prati aṅge kore keli,
aśru kampa pulaka prakāśa

"When Kṛṣṇapriyā Rādhā sees the sweetness of Kṛṣṇa's face and of His eating-pleasure, all Her limbs are playing on the waves of ecstatic love, revealing goosepimples, shiverings and loving tears."

se mādhurya candrānana, kobe hobe daraśana,
he rādhe mādhurya śālini!
vilāpa kusumāñjali, ki amṛta rasa keli,
bhajana sampad ratna khani.

"O Rādhe! O Abode of sweetness! When can I see Your sweet moonlike face like this? Vilāpa Kusumāñjali is like a nectarean play of *rasa* and a jewelmine filled with the treasure of *bhajan* !"

.

VERSE 65:

AYI VIPINAM AṬANTAṀ SAURABHEYĪ KULĀNĀṀ
VRAJA NṚPATI KUMĀRAṀ RAKṢAṆE DĪKṢITAṀ TAM
VIKALA MATI JANANYĀ LĀLYAMĀNAṀ KADĀ TVAṀ
SMITA MADHURA KAPOLAṀ VĪKṢYASE VĪKṢYAMĀṆĀ

ayi - O!; *vipinam* - forest; *aṭantaṁ* - wandering; *saurabheyī* - of the Surabhī-cows; *kulānāṁ* - of the herds; *vraja* - of Vraja; *nṛ-pati* - king; *kumāraṁ* - son; *rakṣaṇe* - for keeping; *dīkṣitaṁ* - initiated; *tam* - him; *vikala* - agitated; *mati* - heart; *jananyā* - by mother; *lālyamānaṁ* - being cuddled; *kadā* - when; *tvaṁ* - You; *smita* - smile; *madhura* - sweet; *kapolaṁ* - cheek; *vīkṣyase* - seen; *vīkṣyamāṇā* - being seen.

When will the prince of Vraja (Kṛṣṇa) glance at You with His smiling face as He goes out to wander in the forest with the Surabhī-cows, in whose care He was initiated, being cuddled by His worried mother?

Explanations: After Kṛṣṇa has His meal Śrī Rādhā and Her girlfriends eat, then there is an amorous meeting between Them in a garden near Nandīśvara-village, named Yogapīṭha Milana, and after this Kṛṣṇa goes out to the meadows to tend His cows (*vana-gamana līlā*), as is described in this verse. In this way the gradual pastimes are fully described. But Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī is so overwhelmed by ecstatic feelings of love-in-separation that he first describes the *vana-gamana*, and after that Śrī Rādhā having Her meal with Her girlfriends. Although he himself relishes these pastimes in the proper order, in his prayers he reveals them in this order. Kṛṣṇa goes out to tend His cows and His mother cuddles Him, not wanting to let Him go. Anxiously she holds Her son to her chest and tells Him, while bathing in her own tears:

hiyāya āguni bharā, āṅkhi bohe bahu dhārā,
dukhe buka vidariyā yāy
ghara para nāhi jāne, se janā colilā vane,
e tāpa kemone sahe yāya

"My heart is filled with fire and many streams (of tears) flow from my eyes. My heart is breaking out of misery!....How can I tolerate this burning feeling?"

ore mora jīvana dulāliyā!

kibā ghare nāhi dhana, keno vā yāibe vana,
rākhāla rākhibe dhenu loiyā (Dhru)

"O child of my heart! Don't we have enough wealth in the house already? You're not from a poor family! Why do You have to go to the forest then? Let the cowherd boys go out with the cows into the forest!"

āge pāche nāhi morā, hāputira puta torā,
āndhala koriyā yābi more
dudhera chāoyāla hoiyā, vane yābe dheṇu loiyā,
ki dekhi rahibo āmi ghare?

"Except for You I don't know anyone else, so if You accidentally become hurt I'll be driven blind! Being my suckling boy, why are You taking Your cows into the forest? Can I just remain at home, peacefully watching it?"

nanī jini tanukhāni, ātape milāya jāni.
se bhaye saghane prāṇa kāṁpe
bāḍava anala pārā, viṣama ravira kharā,
kemone sahibe heno tāpe?

"Your body is even softer than butter! I'm shivering of fear when I think what will happen when the harsh sunrays will touch You. How will You tolerate such heat?"

kuśera aṅkura boḍo, śelera samāna daḍa,
śunite siñciḍā poḍe gāya
śirīṣa kusuma dala, jiniyā caraṇatala,
kemone dhāibe heno pāya

"I'm afraid the big Kuśa-grassroots will hurt You like javelins. Hearing it I sprinkle my body (with tears). How will Your footsoles, that are more tender than Śirīṣa-flowerpetals, run over this ground?"

māyera karuṇā vāṇī, śuniyā gokula maṇi,
koto mate māyere bujhāya.
viṣāda nā koro mone, kichu bhay nāhi vane,
ithe sāthi e śekhara rāya

"Hearing His mother's pitiful words, Gokula-maṇi Kṛṣṇa explains His mother in so many ways: "Don't be sad at heart! There's nothing to fear in the forest!", and Rāya Śekhara is the witness!.

When Kṛṣṇa, the jewel of Gokula, hears these pitiful words He consoles His mother by saying: "Mā! You've not seen the forest of Vṛndāvana! Don't worry in vain! The forestpaths are softened by flowers falling from the trees and vines and there are no sharp pebbles or thorns there. We always play in the shade of the trees and the sharp sunrays cannot harm us! The bumblebees zoom around the blooming honey-filled flowers, different birds are blissfully chirping and we enjoy eating the sweet and ripe pomegranates that fall from the trees. In the evening we simply blow our flutes in the flower gardens to call our peacefully grazing cows together before we return home. Ma! Will you deprive us of this festival of bliss by keeping Me locked in the house the whole day? On the strength of your footdust nothing will happen to us, mā! And what's more, the cows don't want to go into the forest without Me!" Mother

thinks: "Āhā, if my Gopāla feels so happy in the forest, then let Him go!"[156] Then she utters the Nṛsiṁha-*mantras* for Gopāla's protection and gives Him some beautiful instructions:

āmāra śapati lāge, nā dhāiho dhenur āge,
parāṇera parāṇa nīlamaṇi
nikaṭe rākhiho dheṇu, pūriho mohana veṇu,
ghare bosi āmi jeno śuni

"O Life of my life, blue gem of mine! Don't run in front of the cows! Keep them close to You and play Your enchanting flute, so that I can hear You when I sit at home!"

balāi dhāibe āge, āra śiśu vāma bhāge
śrīdāma sudāma sob pāche
tumi tāra mājhe dhāio, saṅga chāḍā nā hoiyo,
māthe boro ripubhoy āche

"Balāi (Balarāma) should run in front of You, all the other boys on Your left and Śrīdāma and Sudāma behind You! Stay between them and don't leave them! I'm very much afraid of our enemies, the demons!"

kṣudhā hoile cāhi khāio, patha pāne cāhi yāi-o,
atiśaya tṛṇāṅkura pathe
kāru bole boḍo dheṇu, phirāite nā yāio kānu
hāta tuli deho more māthe
thākibe tarura chāya, minati koricho māya,
ravi yeno nāhi lāge gāya

"When You feel hungry then eat and look in front of You while You walk, there are many bulbs and pebbles on the road! Promise me, O Kānu (Kṛṣṇa), that You won't wander in front of the big cows! Your mother humbly asks You: Stay in the shade of the trees, so that the sunrays will not scorch Your body!"

Svāminī and Śyāma blink at Each other. Tulasī thinks to herself: "Your smile will blossom like a rose-petal and You will tell Each other with Your eyes: "May We meet again on the bank of Rādhākuṇḍa!" When will I see Your lotus-face looking at Śyāma full of love? Your lotus-face will draw Him away from everyone and bring Him into Your hands. Not only Your face, I will see Your whole divine form! What posture it will stand in! His eyes will meet with Your eyes and His feelings will meet with Yours! Everything will be clearly visible then!" How many things Tulasī says to herself within her mind![157] When the practising devotee is deeply absorbed he does not have to endeavour separately to experience his beloved deity. In the first stage of practice the *svarūpāveśa* will be mixed with bodily consciousness, and he will remember things that are related to his bodily or mental status. When the devotee reaches the stage of *bhāva bhakti*, though, he is a liberated soul free from bodily consciousness, and when he reaches the stage of *prema bhakti* he is always deeply absorbed in his *svarūpāveśa*. Then the stream of transcendental pastimes flows on within his consciousness in an unbroken manner. Rādhā's maidservants are on the level of *mahā bhāva*, and Śrīmatī is the embodiment of *mahā bhāva* Herself. How can we serve Her if we don't know the manners and customs of *bhāva*? Through *bhajana* the heart of the worshipable deity becomes known. Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas do not worship because they are afraid of threats from the revealed scriptures or because they are afraid of hell. Their worship is natural and is based on divine greed for God.

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[156] Śrī Viśvanātha Cakravartī's Kṛṣṇa Bhāvanāmṛta 7,61-67.

[157] Narrated by Śrī Ānanda Gopāla Gosvāmī.

Just as people naturally perform their work in this world without having to be told by anyone, in this way the *rāgānugā* devotees perform their *bhajana*. The devotional greed of a *rāga-bhakta* is more valuable than the *prema* of *vidhi bhakti*. They have no other reason to worship than to make the deity happy with their service. When you love to do *bhajana* the love for the worshipable deity will come automatically. Love is a natural thing, it cannot be forced. It will manifest itself spontaneously in the heart which has been cleansed by *sādhana bhakti*. This is confirmed in Caitanya Caritāmṛta:

nitya siddha Kṛṣṇa prema - sādhya kabhu noy;
śravaṇādi śuddha citte koroye udoy

"Love for Kṛṣṇa is eternally perfect. It is not to be created and it is not a 'new attainment'. It arises in the heart which is purified by hearing and chanting Kṛṣṇa's glories." Kṛṣṇa has always placed an all-blissful item of His pleasure potency (*hlādinī-śakti*) within the hearts of His eternal associates, and when it is captured in the devotee's heart it shines there as *prema. tasyā hlādinyā eva kvāpi sarvānandātiśāyinī vṛttir nityaṁ bhakta-vṛndeṣveva nikṣipyamānā bhagavat prītyākhyayā vartate* (Prīti Sandarbhaḥ 65 Anuvākya). Actually Kṛṣṇa extends His *hlādinī*-potency everywhere, just as the sun freely extends his rays everywhere, but it is not noticed by those whose hearts are contaminated by *māyā*. The devotees who practise the process of hearing, chanting, and remembering the Lord's glories can soon capture this pleasure-potency within their purified hearts, where it starts to shine like *prema*. Therefore the first endeavour of the serious devotee must be to nicely follow the process of hearing and chanting. The Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas don't like anything else but the personal service of Śrī Rādhā. Only the Rādhā-*kiṅkarīs* are eligible for such loyalty! Before Kṛṣṇa goes out to the forest Svāminī's eyes meet Kṛṣṇa's eyes. How many things They tell Each other through the beckonings of Their eyes! The more relish comes, the more beauty and sweetness undulates from Their limbs! The desire to go into forest arises in Śyāmasundara. Later He will hand the responsibility for the cows over to His cowherdboy friends and go to Rādhākuṇḍa, where He will play freely with Śrīmatī and Her girlfriends, who will also come there, on the pretext of worshiping the Sun-god. Therefore He says: *tomāri lāgiyā beḍāi bhramiyā giri-nadī vane vane* (Jñāna dāsa) "For Your sake I wander through the forest, past the rivers and over the mountains!" Blessed is the glory of Rādhārāṇī's love! *kiṅkarī* Tulasī is immersed in this *rasa*.
Śrī Haripada Śila sings:

vraja rāja nanda suta, vrate hoiyā dīkṣita,
varaja maṇḍala rakṣa tāre
vṛndāvana vanacārī, śyāmala sundara hari,
līlāmṛta variṣaṇa kore.

"The son of Nanda, the king of Vraja, is initiated into a vow to protect Vraja Maṇḍala. Thus beautiful blackish Hari, who dwells in the forest of Vṛndāvana, showers His nectarean pastimes."

bhāgyavatī yaśomatī, sarvadā cañcala mati,
nīlamaṇi parama ratane
ekānta vātsalya bhare, lālana pālana kore,
stana kṣīre bhāsi du'nayane

"The fortunate Yaśomatī is always worried about her supreme jewel, sapphire-blue Śyāma and she cuddles and rears him with complete motherly love. Tears of love are flowing from her eyes and love-milk is trickling from her breasts."

se heno nāgara Kṛṣṇa, hoiyā ati satṛṣṇa,

he śrī rādhe dekhibe tomāya
smita hāsya sudhā dhāre, tumi ki dekhibe tāre,
nandakula candra śyāma rāy

"O Śrī Rādhe! This lover Kṛṣṇa will eagerly look at You and You will also look at the smiling face of Śyāma Rāya, the moon of Nanda's family, that is just like a stream of nectar."

premābdhi taraṅga yoto, uthalibe śata śata,
duhu mukha duhu daraśane
sei divya candrānana, kobe hobe daraśana,
nirantara ei bhāvi mone

"When You look at Each other's faces, hundreds of waves will appear on the ocean of Your love. I'm always thinking: "When can I see this divine moonlike face (of Yours)?"

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VERSE 66:

GOṢṬHEŚAYĀTHA KUTUKĀC CHAPATHĀDI PŪRVAṀ
SUSNIGDHAYĀ SUMUKHI MĀTṚ PARĀRDHATO'PI
HĀ HRĪMATI PRIYA-GAṆAIḤ SAHA BHOJYAMĀNĀṀ
KIṀ TVĀṀ NIRĪKṢYA HṚDAYE MUDAM ADYA LAPSYE

goṣṭha - of Vraja; *īśayā* - by the Queen; *atha* - then; *kutukāt* - joyfully; *śapatha* - swearing; *ādi* - and so on; *pūrvaṁ* - by doing; *susnigdhayā* - with great affection; *sumukhi* - fairfaced girl; *mātṛ* - mother; *parārdhataḥ* - than billions; *api* - even; *hā* - O!; *hrīmati* - shy girl; *priya* - dear; *ganaiḥ saha* - with groups; *bhojyamānāṁ* - being fed; *kiṁ* - whether; *tvāṁ* - You; *nirīkṣya* - seeing; *hṛdaye* - in the heart; *mudam* - joy; *adya* - now; *lapsye* - will obtain.

O Hrīmati (shy girl) Sumukhi (fair-faced girl)! When will my heart feel great joy when I see the Queen of Vraja (Yaśodā), who is more affectionate than billions of mothers, taking eager oaths to make You sit down to eat with Your friends?

Explanations: In the previous verse there was an exchange of glances and a prayer for viewing this beautiful scene. In this verse lies a prayer to see Svāminī's *bhojan-līlā* (pastimes of eating). Mother Yaśodā now takes care that Svāminī eats something. Mother wants to feed Her, but Lajjāvatī Svāminī does not want to eat.

yaśodā ākuli, hoiyā vikali,
rāire korolo kore.
āmāra bāchani, mo yāo nichani,
bhojana koroho bole

(Pada Kalpataru)

"Anxiously mother Yaśodā takes Rāi on her lap and say: "O my girl! Don't go now! Eat something first!" Mother Yaśodā touches Svāminī and swears Her to sit down and eat. How much affection she has! More than even billions of mothers: "Why don't You eat a little? Do You think that I'm different from Your own mother? You can laugh, joke, sleep and eat in my house just as You can do in Your own mother Kīrtidā's house! For whom should You be shy?" Mother Yaśodā then sits close to Śrī Rādhikā and personally feeds Her. Śrī Rādhikā does not eat anything else but the nectarean remnants from Kṛṣṇa's meal, so Dhaniṣṭhā has secretly mixed that in the dishes that mother Yaśodā serves Her.

preṣṭha phelāmṛtam svādaiḥ paricitya mudā'plutā
dhaniṣṭhāyāṁ kirantyakṣi-koṇaṁ tām adhinodiyam

(Kṛṣṇa Bhāvanāmṛta 6.109)

While eating this Śrī Rādhikā is overwhelmed by bliss and by casting a merciful glance on Dhaniṣṭhā She makes her also float on waves of bliss. Dhaniṣṭhā feels blessed, knowing that she has made Śrī Rādhā happy with her secret service. Affectionately mother Yaśodā, who is the embodiment of parental love, lifts her hand to personally feed Śrīmatī. Tulasī and the *sakhīs* have great fun in seeing mother Yaśodā feeding Śrīmatī. The *sakhīs* make sly hints to Śrī Rādhikā, as if they want to say: "I understand Your belly will not be filled unless mother Yaśodā feeds You (Kṛṣṇa's remnants)?" Tulasī, whose bliss knows no bounds, stands close by Svāminī, silently hoping that She will give her some of Her remnants, and Svāminī, understanding what is on her mind, secretly drops some of Her chewed food in Tulasī's hand.[158] Blessed is this loving maidservant! After Svāminī has flushed Her mouth and prepares Herself for returning to Her hometown Yāvat, mother Yaśodā anxiously tells Her:

o mora bāchani dhani, satīkula śiromaṇi,
kṣaṇeka viśrāma koro sukhe
nā hoye uchara belā, sakhīgaṇa koro khelā,
karpūra tāmbūla dāo mukhe

"O my precious little girl, O crestjewel of chaste girls, happily take rest for a while. It is not so late, so play a little with Your friends and enjoy some betelleaves with camphor!"

rūpa guṇa kāja tora, parāṇa nichani mora,
śutiyā svapane dekhi sadā
toma heno guṇa nidhi, āmāre nā dilā vidhi,
hṛdaye rahiyā gelā sādhā

"Your form, qualities and activities soothe my heart and I always dream of them when I sleep. My heart feels pain when I wonder why Fate did not bestow a ocean of virtues like You upon me."

dhātāra māthāye bāja, ye heno koriyā kāja,
āmāre bhāṅgilā kibā doṣe
bāchāra vivāha tāre, heno nārī nāhi pure,
cāhiyā nā pāi kon deśe

[158] Narrated by Śrī Ānanda Gopāla Gosvāmī.

"Let a thunderbolt fall on the head of the Creator (Fate) for doing this! What wrong have I done to be devoid of a daughter like You? I cannot find any girl in the whole area as suitable to marry to my boy as You!"

yaśodāra viṣāda kothā, śuni vṛṣabhānu sutā,
vadane vasana diyā hāse
pulake pūralo gā, mukhe nāhi sare rā,
bhāsilo nārīra sneha rase

"Hearing Yaśodā's sad words, Vṛṣabhānu's daughter laughed naughtily, covering Her smile with Her veil. Both were floating in the nectarstream of female affection, their bodies studded with goosebumps and their mouths unable to make any sound out of ecstasy".[159]

After being cuddled by mother Yaśodā Śrī Rādhikā and Her girlfriends take a little rest and chew some betel-leaves, being sprinkled by the *rasa* of mother Yaśodā's motherly love. The more one loves Kṛṣṇa the more mother Yaśodā, the ocean of parental love, is attached to that person. The scriptures and the saints have glorified the names Rādhā, Rādhikā and Gāndharvikā, because these names have defined Rādhā's intrinsic position. *Kṛṣṇa vāñchā pūrti rūpa kore ārādhana; ataeva rādhikā nāma purāṇe vākhāne* (C.C.) "Because She worships Kṛṣṇa by fulfilling His desires the Purāṇas have called Her Rādhikā." *prema* is the best ingredient for worshiping Kṛṣṇa, and Śrī Rādhikā is the presiding goddess of *prema*. No one knows how to serve Kṛṣṇa like She does and She is not known in connection with anything else but loving Kṛṣṇa. The bondage of emotions is called *prema:*

sarvathā dhvaṁsa rahitaṁ satyapi dhvaṁsa kārane
yad bhāva bandhanaṁ yūnoḥ sa premā parikīrtitaḥ

(Ujjvala Nīlamaṇi, Rūpa Gosvāmī)

"*prema* is that bondage of emotions between a loving couple that is never destroyed, although there may be ample reasons to break up". This does not come from one side, but from both sides. Rādhā is the embodiment of love that has Kṛṣṇa as its object, and that is again meeting with the love Kṛṣṇa feels for Rādhā. Because Rādhikā loves Kṛṣṇa completely Śrī Kṛṣṇa also surrenders to Her service by applying red lac to Her footsoles, making *tilaka* on Her forehead, massaging Her feet and so on. As an independent lady-love (*svādhīna bhartṛkā*) Śrīmatī can order Him to do these things without any hesitation! It is not the service of the maidservants, nor even the service of Śrī Kṛṣṇa then, it is Love itself serving Her! It is the culmination of deep love, heart's service. For instance, at night's end, the *sakhīs* are asking: "Why are You messing up our Priya *sakhī's* clothes and ornaments? Put them back where they were!" Śyāma dresses Svāminī:

vācā sūcita śarvarī rati-kalā prāgalbhyayā rādhikāṁ
vrīḍā kuñcita locanāṁ viracayann agre sakhīnām asau
tad vakṣoruha citra keli makarī pāṇḍitya pāraṁ gataḥ
kaiśoraṁ saphalī karoti kalayan kuñje vihāraṁ hariḥ

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[159] Śrī Baṅgabihārī Vidyālaṅkāra adds: *he sumukhi goṣṭheśāyāḥ sneha-pātratvena nairvighnyena śrī kṛṣṇa saṅga pratīteḥ śobhanaṁ prasannaṁ mukhaṁ yasyā* "Śrī Rādhikā is called Sumukhī here because Her face looks beautifully satisfied out of Her conviction that She will meet Kṛṣṇa without obstacles and because She is the object of love for the Queen of Vraja."

(Bhakti Rasāmṛta Sindhuḥ 2.1.231)

Slightly smiling, He draws leaves on Rādhikā's breasts with a fragrant substance and boldly describes His pastimes with Rādhikā in the previous night to the *sakhīs*. Śrī Rādhikā then rebukes Him with lowered eyes of bashfulness. These rebukes make Kṛṣṇa even more happy than any other service She may render to Him, and in this way Rādhikā worships Him. The sweetness of Śyāma's love then becomes manifest on Rādhikā's face. In connection with this *prema* Rādhikā is dyed. She manifests a wonderful sweetness in each of Her limbs, like the smile on Her face, the glances from Her eyes, etc. Śrī Rādhā's natural glance is undulated by the waves of Her love for Kṛṣṇa. Śrī Rādhā's devotional activities are very sweet in the eyes of Śyāma. 1) With Her own hands Svāminī draws a picture of Śyāma in the *kuñja*. Śyāmasundara enters the *kuñja* and sees Her looking at His picture and thinking: "Somehow I spend the days holding Your picture to My heart! Now You have come here, will I not accept You? Come, come!". Thus, through the connection of *prema*, the colour of love comes gushing out. 2) Śrī Rādhikā stretches out Her arms, holding a high branch to pick flowers. She shows Her armpits. All that time She did not say anything, She speaks by showing Her armpits. *prema* becomes tasteful because of Their mutual love. Śrī Rādhā is best known as the embodiment of love for Kṛṣṇa. *Kṛṣṇa preme bhāvita yāra cittendriya kāya* (C.C.) "Her body, senses and mind are all made of love for Kṛṣṇa." She makes Her Priyatama (beloved Kṛṣṇa) melt. Their relationship is completely free from awe and reverence. The embodiment of love for Kṛṣṇa is colored by Kṛṣṇa's love. One day Svāminī picks flowers in Vṛndāvana when Śyāma comes there, dressed as a garlandmaking girl. Shyly Rādhikā walks away. How amazing is Her power! She covers Her limbs with a blue veil, in the mood of: "I'm a princess! Can a garland-girl like You just stand before Me?" Her bodily lustre mixes with the colour of Her blue veil, showing the shapes of each of Her limbs through the thin cloth, so that Śyāma's eyes can enjoy the sweetness of these limbs. He has never seen Her like that before! Because of all these extraordinary kinds of worship She is called Rādhā. And because mother Yaśodā unconsciously feels that, she is more affectionate to Her than even billions of mothers. Tulasī is beside herself of ecstasy when she beholds Rādhā and Yaśodā's sweet mutual love.[160]
Śrī Haripada Śila sings:

mātṛ gaṇa madhya maṇi, snehavatī nandarāṇī,
he rādhe dekhibe tomāre.
paṭṭāñcale jhāṁpi dhani, lajjāvatī suvadanī,
sakhī saṅge gṛha abhyantare.

"Hey Rādhe! When You sit in her house with Your friends, Nandarāṇī, who is the jewel among affectionate mothers, looks at You, so You shyly cover Your fair face."

sneha bhare yaśomatī, vyākulita hoiyā ati,
bolilen madhu rasa vāṇī.
he vatse he kalyāṇi, vātsalyera nidhi tumi,
mora nīlamaṇi sama jāni.

"Yaśomatī, who is agitated by her feelings of total love, speaks honey-sweet words to You, saying: "Hey Vatse (daughter)! Hey Kalyāṇi (beautiful, auspicious girl)! You are the jewellike object of my parental love, just as my Nīlamaṇi (blue jewel Kṛṣṇa)!"

aṅga sparśe kori tora, śapatha rohilo mora,
mātṛ sama koriya bhāvanā

[160] Narrated by Śrī Ānanda Gopāla Gosvāmī.

lajjā chāḍi hemāṅgini, bhojana koroho dhani
mora gṛha maṅgala pratimā

"I touch Your body and I swear You: just consider me to be Your own mother! O Hemāṅgini (golden limbed girl)! Give up Your shyness and eat! I have You as auspiciousness personified in my home!"

mātāra vacanāmṛte, lajjāvanata rādhe,
kṛṣṇera adharāmṛta śeṣa
priya sahacarī saṅge, bhojana koribā raṅge,
kobe dibe phelā lava leśa

"O Rādhe! You lower Your head out of shyness when You hear these words of mother Yaśodā. When will You give me a fragment of the remnants from Kṛṣṇa's nectarean lips, after You have relished them with Your girlfriends?"

e sab kautuka līlā, dekhi kobe vrajabālā,
hobe mora sukhera ullāsa
vilāpa kusumāñjali, sva saṅkalpa padyāvali,
nivedaye raghunātha dāsa.

"O girl of Vraja! When will I become very happy on seeing these joyful pastimes? Thus Raghunātha Dāsa offers these verses, that contain his own prayers, named Vilāpa Kusumāñjali."

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VERSE 67:

ĀLIṄGANENA ŚIRASAḤ PARICUMBANENA
SNEHĀVALOKANA BHAREṆA CA KHAÑJANĀKṢI
GOṢṬHEŚAYĀ NAVA VADHŪM IVA LĀLYAMĀNĀṀ
TVAṀ PREKṢYA KIṀ HṚDI MAHOTSAVAM ĀTANIṢYE

āliṅganena - by embracing; *śirasaḥ* - on the head; *paricumbanena* - by kissing all over; *sneha* - affectionately; *avalokana* - looking; *bhareṇa* - with great; *ca* - and; *khañjana* - wagtailbird; *akṣi* - eyes (fem.); *goṣṭheśayā* - by the queen of Vraja; *nava* - new; *vadhūm* - bride: *iva* - just like;*lālyamānaṁ* - being cuddled; *tvaṁ* - You; *prekṣya* - seeing; *kiṁ* - whether; *hṛdi* - in the heart; *mahā* - great; *utsavam* - festival; *ātaniṣye* - I will attain.

O Khañjanākṣi (girl with eyes as restless as wagtail birds) ! When will I feel a great festival of joy in my heart when I see You being cuddled by the Queen of Vraja, who embraces You, kisses Your head and lovingly stares at You as if You are Her newly married daughter-in-law?

Explanations: Śrī Raghunātha submits to Svāminī's lotus feet how severely his heart suffers for want of Her. His desire to see Her is also just for Her pleasure, only to serve Her, not for his own happiness. There is no deceitfulness in a pure, loving heart, and this love is most pure in Vraja. When the *sādhaka* follows in the footsteps of Kṛṣṇa's devotees in Vraja the rays of the moon of *rāga bhakti* will be reflected in his crystal-clear heart. Then love will be free from deceit. Outside of Vraja all forms of *prema* are more or less mixed with feelings of awe and reverence, even in the 'appendix of Vraja-līlā', Navadvīpa-līlā. Rāmānanda Rāya was, for instance, Viśākhā-*sakhī* in Vraja, so he should have had pure fraternal love for Śrīman Mahāprabhu. But when he met the Lord on the bank of the Godāvari-river, and their mutual love arose, Rāma Rāya could not take the Lord to his own home. The Vedic *brāhmaṇas* invited the Lord and Rāya respectfully told Him:

kāhā tumi sākṣāt īśvara nārāyaṇa; kāhāṅ mui rājasevī śūdrādhama
mora sparśe nā korile ghṛṇa veda bhaya; mora daraśana tomā vede niṣedhaya
ākṛtye prākṛtye tomāra īśvara lakṣaṇa; jīve nā sambhave ei aprākṛta guṇa

"Where are You, Lord Nārāyaṇa Himself, and where am I, a royal servant and a lowly *śūdra*? You did not fear the Vedic injunctions by touching me, although the Vedas forbid You to touch me. Both in form and nature You show all the symptoms of God. Such transcendental attributes are not possible in a mere living entity." (C.C. Madhya 8.43)

But Kṛṣṇa's friends in Vraja eat His food and climb on His shoulder! Therefore there is no other place but Vraja which is free from any whiff of awe and reverance. Without allegiance to the people of Vraja there will inevitably come some *aiśvarya-jñāna* (feeling of lordliness about Kṛṣṇa). Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the complete non-dual truth and Śrī Rādhā is the Supreme Goddess (*svayaṁ bhagavatī*), the complete *mahā bhāva*. This is the *tattva*-side of it, but what we know is the *rasa*-side - He's Śrī Rādhā's Prāṇa Bandhu! Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī humbly stayed in Haridāsa Ṭhākura's cottage at Purī, afraid to approach Mahāprabhu directly. But in Vraja, as Rūpa Mañjarī, he prays:

karuṇāṁ muhur arthaye paraṁ tava vṛndāvana cakravartini
api keśiripor yathā bhavet sa cāṭu prārthana bhājanaṁ janaḥ

(Cāṭu Puṣpāñjali, 23)

"O empress of Vṛndāvana! O Śrī Rādhike! Please make Keśiripu (Kṛṣṇa, or the selfsame Mahāprabhu!) pitifully pray to me (for Your audience)!" The sweet mood towards Kṛṣṇa, totally free from awe, is nowhere else to be found but in the shelter of Śrī Rādhā's lotus feet. Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī shows that even in Vraja there is more awe and reverence felt by Candrāvalī than by Śrī Rādhikā:

nijam agharipunāṁse nyastam ākṛsya savyaṁ bhujam iha nidadhānād akṣam asrokṣitākṣī
padayugam api baṅkaṁ śaṅkayā vikṣipantī prati yuvati vayasyāṁ smerayāmāsa gaurī

(Ujjvala Nīlamaṇi Sthāyi 91)

"Candrāvali takes her left arm from Kṛṣṇa's shoulder while they are dancing in the Rāsa-festival and embraces Him with her right arm instead. Carefully and crookedly she moves both her feet, being afraid that she will hit Kṛṣṇa's feet while they dance together. Seeing this, all the other young girls laugh!"

How freely and sweetly our Svāminī dances! How freely and independently She lifts Her feet upon Śyāma's chest! Śrī Rūpa says: "I am a maidservant of that Rādhā, that's why

Śyāma is simply wandering behind me!" In Kāśī (Benares) Śrīman Mahāprabhu and Sanātana Gosvāmī embraced Each other, to the astonishment of Candra Śekhara. *dui jane galāgali rodana apāra; dekhi candra śekharera hoilo camatkāra* (C.C.) Śrī Gaurāṅga had just returned from Vṛndāvana and was in the ecstasy of Virahiṇī (separated) Rādhā, and Śrī Sanātana Gosvāmī was absorbed in his *siddha svarūpa* of Labaṅga Mañjarī. Both were absorbed in their 'previous' moods (of Kṛṣṇa's Vraja-līlā), but as soon as they returned to external consciousness the mood of awe and reverence returned. Sanātana then said: *more prabhu nā koro sparśana*! "O My Lord, don't touch me!" and the Lord said: *tomā sparśi pavitra hoite; bhakti-bole pāra tumi brahmāṇḍa śodhite* (C.C.) "I'm touching you to purify Myself. On the strength of your devotion you can purify the whole universe!" The service of Śrī Rādhā is Śrīman Mahāprabhu's gift, and was taught by Himself and by the *ācāryas* who surrendered to His lotus feet. When one's *siddha svarūpa* arises, feelings of separation from Śrī Rādhā will become very strong. 'I want to see You today, at this moment! I won't waste anymore time! I'm alone, without any company! With whom else but You should I stay?" That's the mood of someone who was touched by Śrī Rādhārānī's mood. Mahāprabhu weeps:

yugāyitaṁ nimeṣena cakṣuṣā prāvṛṣāyitam
śūnyāyitaṁ jagat sarvaṁ govinda viraheṇa me
udvege divasa nā yāy kṣaṇa hoilo yuga sama; varṣāra megha prāya aśru variṣe nayana
govinda virahe śūnya hoilo tribhuvana; tuṣānale poḍe yeno nā yāy jīvana {C.C.}

"Because of My agitation the day will not pass, a second appears to be like an age to Me and My eyes are like monsoon clouds that shower tears. Out of separation from Govinda the three worlds became empty. I am burning in a slowfire and My life will not leave Me!"

Śrī Dāsa Gosvāmī is in that state. "I feel so much pain in my heart! Please stop my misery, show Yourself to me today!" How deeply he is absorbed in his *siddha svarūpa*! Now he is not Raghunātha, now he is Tulasī Mañjarī and falls on the bank of Śrī Rādhākuṇḍa, anxiously lamenting: "O Beautiful lake! How many pastimes isn't my Īśvarī playing on Your banks with Her most dearly beloved Priyatama? How dear you are to Rādhā-Śyāma! I don't want anything else! Please show me Īśvarī's lotus feet just once!" Some of this love-in-separation for Svāminī will also arise in the heart of the practising devotee who follows in the footsteps of such an *ācārya* as Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī.

Śrī Raghunātha now sees another transcendental picture before his eyes: He can relish the sweet sight of how mother Yaśodā sweetly cuddles Svāminī. After eating Svāminī takes a little rest. Then Mā calls Her and Tulasī brings Her to mother Yaśodā, who tightly embraces Her, cuddles Her, kisses Her and smells Her head as if She is Her own newly married daughter-in-law. Again and again mother holds Svāminī's chin and looks in Her eyes, floating in her own loving tears. With choked voice mother Yaśodā says: "O my girl, without You my whole life is dark! Don't forget to come here always!" Śrī Rādhikā may be respectful to mother Yaśodā, but Her control over Her son is complete. Nobody can deal so freely with Kṛṣṇa as She can. Śrī Rādhikā has no such fears and worries about stepping on Kṛṣṇa's feet. Because of Her supreme love for Him, She can do with Him whatever She likes. She even puts Her feet on His chest if She likes. "When will I see You like that?" *nava-vadhūm iva lālyamānām.* Śrīla Kṛṣṇa Dāsa Kavirāja writes in Govinda Līlāmṛta (4.70-71):

hṛdy udgataiḥ suta karāgrahaṇābhilāṣais tad bhūṣaṇaiḥ su bahuśaḥ saha yāni yatnāt
niṣpādya tan nava vadhū prati-rūpakāṇi snehād dhṛtāni sadane vara sampuṭeṣu
tair bhūṣaṇair atha dhaniṣṭhakayopanītais tāmbūla candana varāmbara nāgajaiś ca
ālīvṛtam nava vadhūm iva tāṁ vrajeśā sammānya hārda balitā muditā vabhūva

"Filled with affectionately eager desires to marry her son, Yaśodā carefully placed many suitable ornaments in excellent baskets at her home, as if Śrī Rādhikā was her newly married

daughter-in-law. Dhaniṣṭhā brought these baskets to Śrī Rādhikā along with betelleaves, sandalpaste, vermilion and new garments. Queen Yaśodā was very happy to see Śrī Rādhikā surrounded by Her friends, as if She was her own newly married daughter-in-law."[161] At this time Dhaniṣṭhā will arrange for a short meeting of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa (*yoga pīṭha*) in the Giri Nikuñja at Nandīśvara. Śrī Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī described that in his Vraja Vilāsa Stava (33):

vrajeśvaryānītāṁ bata rasavatī kṛtya vidhaye
mudā kāmaṁ nandīśvara giri nikuñje praṇayinī
chalaiḥ Kṛṣṇaṁ rādhāṁ dayitam abhitāṁ sārayati yā
dhaniṣṭhāṁ tat prāṇa priyatara sakhīṁ tāṁ kila bhaje

"I worship Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa's dearmost girlfriend Dhaniṣṭhā, who joyfully arranges with different tricks for Śrī Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa's meeting in the Giri-nikuñja of Nandīśvara after Śrī Rādhā was brought to Nandīśvara in the morning by Yaśodā, the Queen of Vraja, to cook for Kṛṣṇa."[162] This *yogapīṭha-līlā* goes along with the devotee's *mantra-smaraṇa* (meditation on one's initiation-*mantra*). The regular *smaraṇa* of a fixed devotee continues like a stream (*svārasikī upāsana*) throughout the day, but the *mantra-smaraṇa* (or *mantramayī upāsana*), that occurs inbetween, is compared to a lake (*hrada*) within that stream. The riverstream of regular *smaraṇa* passes on through this lake after the *mantramayī upāsana*.
Śrī Haripada Śila sings:

khanjanākṣi rādhārāṇī, Kṛṣṇa kānta śiromaṇi,
tomā dekhi vrajendra gṛhiṇī
koto nā ādara kore, vātsalyete buke dhare,
āliṅgaṇe juḍābe parāṇi

"O Rādhe whose eyes are as restless as wagtail-birds! You are the crownjewel of Kṛṣṇa's lovers! How affectionately the Queen of Vraja is looking at You, soothing her own heart by embracing You and holding You to her chest!"

nandālaye vinodinī, maṅgala svarūpā tumi,
eto boli mastaka āghrāne
nava vadhū prāya mone, yaśomatī sayatane
koriben lālana pālane.

"Saying: "O Vinodini! You are the very form of auspiciousness for king Nanda's abode!", she smells Your head. Carefully Yaśomatī cuddles You, as if You are her newly married daughter-in-law."

vrajeśvarīra sneha prīti, dekhiyā tomāra prati,
se vaibhava mahā mahotsave
nitya nava nava bhāve, garavinīra se garave,
kobe mora hṛdaya bharibe

---

[161] Sanskrit commentator Śrī Baṅgabihārī Vidyālaṅkāra adds: *yaśodā sneha-yantritvena svācchandyābhāvād vanagata śrī kṛṣṇābhisārāya sakhīnāṁ cāturyākaṅkṣayā tāsāṁ mukha nirīkṣanāya khañjane iva īkṣaṇe yasyā* "On the one hand Śrī Rādhikā is subdued by the love of mother Yaśodā and on the other hand She is unable to freely join Śrī Kṛṣṇa, who is about to go out to the forest. Desiring some clever solution from Her girlfriends She blinks at their faces. Hence She is called Khañjanākṣī, or a girl whose eyes are as restless as wagtail-birds."

[162] The entire explanation of verse 67 is by Śrī Ānanda Gopāla Gosvāmī.

"When will my heart be filled with ever-new feelings of pride when I see Vrajeśvarī's love for You, which is like a great festival of glory?"

.

VERSE 68:

HA RŪPA MAÑJARI SAKHI PRAṆAYENA DEVĪṀ
TVAD BĀHU DATTA BHUJA VALLARIM ĀYATĀKṢĪM
PAŚCĀD AHAṀ KALITA KĀMA TARAṄGA RAṄGĀṀ
NEṢYĀMI KIṀ HARI-VIBHŪṢITA KELI-KUÑJAM

hā - O!; *rūpa mañjari* - Rūpa Mañjari; *sakhi* - girlfriend; *praṇayena* - with love; *devīṁ* - goddess Radhika; *tvad* - Your; *bāhu* - arm; *datta* - given; *bhuja vallarim* - vine-like arm; *āyata* - wide; *akṣīm* - eyes (fem.); *paścāt* - from behind; *aham* - I; *kalita* - moved; *kāma* - of pure love shown in the form of lust; *taraṅga* - waves; *raṅgāṁ* - place; *neṣyāmi* - I will take; *kiṁ* - whether; *hari* - by Hari; *vibhūṣita* - decorated; *keli* - play; *kuñjam* - grove.

O my dear friend Rūpa Mañjari! When can I walk behind you when you lovingly take wide-eyed goddess Rādhikā, who is moved by waves of desire, to the playgrove that is decorated by Śrī Hari, as She holds Her vine-like arm with yours?

Explanations: Śrīla Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī now arrives at the description of Śrī-Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa's midday pastimes. Śrī Raghunātha's state of divine madness simply increases because of the intense pain of love-in-separation he feels. His *svarūpāveśa* is his only support. In it he can relish Svāminī's form, qualities and pastimes. Because of his divine madness of love he is unable to find words to express his experiences. Whatever he could bring under words he has revealed in this 'Vilāpa Kusumāñjali'. Śrīmatī Rādhikā will surely come to console he who is weeping over Her and for whom She is everything, and take him to Her lotus feet. Who can be as merciful as She is? One of the 108 names Śrī Raghunātha dāsa gives Her is *karuṇā vidravad dehā*: "She whose body melts out of compassion". Normally only a person's heart melts out of compassion, but Śrīmatī makes Her whole body melt. This is unheard of before! Śrī Kṛṣṇa will not give His mercy to one who does not worship Him. He has said that Himself in Bhagavad Gītā: *ye yathā mām prapadyante tāms tathaiva bhajāmy aham*. But Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu gives *prema* even if He is rejected or insulted. He has become so merciful because He has accepted Svāminījī's mood. Then it may be asked, but it is said in Laghu Bhāgavatāmṛta (Pūrva 5.37):

santv avatārā bahavaḥ puṣkara-nābhasya sarvato bhadrāḥ
kṛṣṇād anyaḥ ko vā latāsv api premado bhavati

"There may be many descents of the lotus-naveled Viṣṇu, that are blessed in all respects, but who else but Kṛṣṇa bestows love on even the vines and other inert creatures?"

But Kṛṣṇa acts like that only with the people of Vraja, when He is Rādhikā's heart's friend. He becomes so luscious and sweet when He gets the love of Premamayī Rādhā! With His nectarean form and flute-song He infused *prema* even in the trees, vines, animals, birds, stones and clouds! Śrīmad Bhāgavata (Canto 10, chapter 21) clearly describes how Kṛṣṇa bestows *prema* on all the vines, trees, birds, deer and waters of Vraja, but not to any creature from elsewhere. The Lord of Dvārakā (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) tells His Principal Queen Satyabhāmā:

rūpeṇa veśeṇa ravāmṛtena vaṁśyās ca pūrvānuditena viśvam
sammohitaṁ premabhareṇa kṛtsnaṁ tiṣṭhantu dūre vrajavāsināś te

(Bṛhad Bhāgavatāmṛta 1.7.110)

"I enchant all the inert creatures in Vraja with love with My wonderful form, My dress and the nectarean sound of My flute, what to speak of the people there?"

adhunā tu sa evāhaṁ svajñātīn yādavān api
netuṁ nārhāmi taṁ bhāvaṁ narmakrīḍā kutūhalaiḥ

"I am still here (in Dvārakā), but now I cannot make even My own relatives and the Yādavas attain such a mood. I am unable to play such funny, joking pastimes here!" {B.B.1.7.114} Elsewhere there is some reservation in the bestowal of mercy, but in Vraja there is only causeless mercy. The touch of Svāminījī's love has kept Kṛṣṇa so sweet all this time, although in Vraja (during the ancient manifest pastimes, Ed.) this could not be grasped. Now that Kṛṣṇa took Her mood and luster to become Gaura He revealed the greatness of Her causeless compassion to everyone. She is by nature the most merciful One. In the summertime, when the sun was fiercely shining, Śrīla Raghunātha Dāsa was meditating in an open place on the bank of Śyāmakunda. All-merciful Svāminī then came to shade him with Her veil, catching the full force of the sun Herself, making sweatdrops appear on Her face. Raghunātha Dāsa was not aware of anything external. Meanwhile, Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī came to see how Raghunātha was doing and, seeing what was going on, he disturbed him and said: "Raghunātha! Whom are you meditating upon?" Raghunātha Dāsa said: "On Svāminījī!" Sanātana said: "Are you looking for She who stands behind you to shade you from the sun?" Hearing this, Raghunātha Dāsa had understood what had happened and he began to cry loudly. "Don't meditate out in the open, make yourself a cottage (so that our mistress does not have to come and take all this trouble to protect you)!", Sanātana told Raghunātha. Śrīla Raghunātha has sold himself to Svāminī's lotus feet: "My Svāmini, I know You! You will introduce Yourself to me in the company of Your Priyatama! *mad īśā nāthatve vraja vipina candram...bhaja manaḥ* (Manaḥ Śikṣā - 9): "O mind! Remember that the moon of the Vraja-forest (Kṛṣṇa) is the Lord of My Queen (Rādhā)!" First Rādhā, then Śyāma! *āmāra īśvarī hon vṛndāvaneśvarī; tāra prāṇanātha boli bhaji giridhārī:* "My mistress is Rādhā, the Queen of Vṛndāvana, and I worship Giridhārī because I know He is the Lord of Her life!" This loyalty fills Śrī Raghunātha's heart.

When this revelation disappears Raghunātha Dāsa cries pitifully, falling on the bank of Rādhākuṇḍa. Then he suddenly hears the jingling of anklebells, which soothes his pain somewhat. He sees Śrīmatī Rūpa Mañjarī before him. Seeing her he remembers Svāminī, since she is the *mañjarī* (bud) of Svāminī's *rūpa* (form). A beautiful form, not yet blossoming. A bumblebee will not sit on an unripe flower. Rūpa sweetly asks him: "Tulasi, what's happening?" These customs have nothing to do with worldly customs. How sweetly she says: "O see Tulasi, I have come!" In his spiritual absorption Raghunātha gets up and says: "O *sakhi* Rūpa Mañjari! I cannot tolerate the burning separation from Svāminī anymore! Will I not attain Her service at all?" Rūpa Mañjarī says: "What service will you render?" Tulasī: "I want

to come along with you to bring Svāminī into that *kuñja* on the bank of Śrī Rādhākuṇḍa which is decorated by Hari!"[163] Śyāma, being eager to meet Svāminī, sends a girl-messenger in the form of His fluteplaying (*muralī-dūtī*) and when Premamayī Rādhikā hears that sound She becomes impatient and forgets all other considerations.

mātha hi tapana, tapata patha bāluka,
ātapa dahana vithāra
nonika putali tanu, caraṇa kamala janu,
dina-hi koyolo abhisāra

hari hari! premaka gati anivāra!
kānu paraśa rase, paravaśa rasavati,
vichurala sakala vicāra

gurujana nayana, pāśagaṇa vāraṇa,
māruta maṇḍala dhūli.
tā sañe meli, calali vara-raṅgiṇī,
pati geha nītahi bhuli
yoto yoto vighini, jitali anurāgini,
sādhali manasija mantra.
govinda dāsa kohoi - aba samujhau,
hari sañe rasamaya tantra

"The sun shines on Her head and scorches the sand on the road, spreading itself in the sky like a burning canopy, as She goes at to meet Kṛṣṇa at noontime. Her body is as soft as butter and Her feet are as tender as lotus flowers. Hari! Hari! The course of love cannot be stopped! This amorous girl gives up all considerations, desiring to be touched by Kṛṣṇa! The most excellent playful Rāi is shielded from the noose-like looks of her suspicious elders by a whirlwind that throws up a lot of dust. In this way She went, forgetting all about Her home and Her husband. O passionate Rāi! You have conquered over all obstacles after mastering all of Cupid's *mantras*! Govinda Dāsa says: "May Hari now teach You the *tantras* of *rasa*!"

Raṅgamayī Svāminī floats on the waves of *kāma*, holding your (Rūpa Mañjarī's) arm while I (Tulasī) walk anxiously behind Her, watching Her stumbling gait, afraid that She will trip or fall out of eagerness to meet Kṛṣṇa, and ready to hold Her then. When Svāminī sees a blackish Tamāla-tree on the way She mistakes it for Kṛṣṇa and when She sees a golden vine entwining this tree, She mistakes it for a rival *gopī* embracing Him. You will help Her (out of Her illusion), while I will help Svāminī meet with Śyāma in a *kuñja*-house which He adorns with His own bodily luster. The words *kāma taraṅga raṅgam* apply here to billowing waves of *mādana rasa*, the pinnacle of *prema*, and not to material lust. The *tantras* say: *premaiva goparāmānām kāma ity agamat pratham* - "The pure love of the *gopīs* is known as lust because the external activity appears to be the same". Nevertheless, there is complete absence here of desire for personal sense enjoyment. That's a deep paradoxical secret! *sahaja gopīra prema nahe prākṛta kāma; kāma krīḍā sāmye tāre kohe kāma nāma* (C.C.) In this world it is also noticable that some activities appear the same externally, but have different targets. For instance, two persons may be picking flowers in a garden. One of them is doing it to gratify his own nose, and the other is doing it to worship the Lord. The first person binds himself to this illusory world by striving for sense-gratification, while the other unfolds *prema* by working within the realm of the Lord's *svarūpa śakti* (innate energy) named *bhagavad-bhakti.* It is well known that the Lord is not captured by mere lust which is not attented with pure love for Him. Seeing

[163] Narrated by Śrī Ānanda Gopāla Gosvāmī.

that the Lord is controlled to the utmost by the *gopīkās*' lust it can be easily understood that this lust is the pinnacle of deep love. Therefore Śrī Jīva Gosvāmī writes in Bhakti Sandarbha: *eṣa bhāvaḥ (kāntā bhāvaḥ) kāma tulyatvāt śrī gopikāsu kāmādi śabdenāpy abhihitaḥ. smarākhya kāma viśeṣas tvanya vailakṣaṇyāt. kāma sāmānyam khalu spṛhā sāmānyātmakam. prīti sāmānyas tu viṣayānukūlyātmakas tad anugata viṣaya spṛhādi mayo jñāna viśeṣa iti lakṣitam. tato dvayoḥ samāna prāya ceṣṭatve'pi kāma sāmānyasya ceṣṭā svīyānukūlya tātparyā. śuddha prīti mātrasya ceṣṭā tu priyānukūlya tātparyaiva* "This amorous love is called *kāma* or lust because it resembles lust. But the mundane Cupid called Smara is different from this, for many differences can be seen between the two. Usually the word *kāma* is used to indicate desire or lust and *prīti* or *prema* the attitude of wanting to please the Lord. Therefore, although the activities of lust and love appear to be the same, the desire to please oneself has been called lust and the desire to please Śrī Kṛṣṇa has been called pure love. From this it is easily understood that the lust of the *gopīs*, who are free from desires for personal sense-pleasure, is the pinnacle of pure love."

Svāminī goes on *abhisāra*, holding Śrī Rūpa Mañjarī's hand. Waves of lust are manifest in each of Her limbs. Her passionate love for Kṛṣṇa is like a wave, which is manifest through the gestures of Her eyes, Her gait and Her words. It's a strong desire to meet Him, but it is all for Kṛṣṇa's pleasure! Anxiously She asks Rūpa Mañjarī: "How long will it take before I can see Him again? Tell Me Rūpa, how far is it still? Aha! How eagerly He must be sitting there, waiting for Me!?" There is a delight in separation, although it brings suffering. Such delight cannot be found in this world. Unless feelings of separation arise there can be no awakening of a strong desire to attain the beloved. Therefore the first target of the practising devotee must be love-in-separation. Unless there is eagerness, born from a feeling of want, one cannot become qualified to experience anything. The devotee should not forget this when becoming absorbed in the bliss of meditation. "A person like me feels no spiritual want at all. I'm having fun, my belly is full, everything's OK!" The practising devotee will feel ashamed when he realizes the difference between his careless way of life and the activities of the Gosvāmīs. Śrīman Mahāprabhu stood behind the Garuḍa Pillar and viewed Lord Jagannātha from there, bathing in His own tears. *garuḍa stambhera tale, āche eka nimna khāle, se khāla bharilo aśru jale* (C.C.) Śrī Gaurasundara is Rādhā-bhāvāḍhya, enriched by Rādhā's mood, seeing Himself meeting Kṛṣṇa at Kurukṣetra as a beggar-woman. Although Kṛṣṇa is Her all-in-all, Svāminī could not embrace Him and hold Him to Her heart. What pain, what an anguish! Boundless bliss agitates the ocean of anguish as She thinks to Herself: "Go to Vraja, I want to see You in Vraja!" Raghunātha dāsa is the embodiment of Śrīman Mahāprabhu's grace. His love-in-separation is natural. The devotees will greatly benefit by hearing and chanting about the stream of his worship.

Together with Tulasī and Rūpa Svāminī arrives at the gate of the *kuñja. hari vibhūṣita keli-kuñja*. Śrī Hari singlehandedly decorated the trystingplace where Rūpa and Tulasī bring Svāminī and is waiting there for Her. Rādhikā is known as *vāsaka sajjikā*, a girl who decorates the trysting-place awaiting Her hero, but now the situation is reversed. Hari made a sittingplace for Her with flowers moistened by His own loving tears. The *kuñja* is adorned by Hari's form, qualities and craftsmanship. How expert He is in decorating! It is as if He decorates all four sides of the *kuñja* with His pure love for His Priyājī, thinking: 'Here I will sit with My beloved!' This is the expertise of *prema sevā,* the mutual service of love. When Svāminī enters the *kuñja* with Rūpa and Tulasī She is amazed. First of all it is the *kuñja* which delights Cupid, and then it is also decorated by the very hands of the transcendental youthful Cupid of Vṛndāvana! Svāminī asks: "Śyāma! Who decorated this *kuñja*?" Hari says: "Who knows? You understand!" Śrīmatī: "You have done it, nobody else can decorate like this! You have done all this work, knowing that I would come! I should have been here with You to help You!" Today She is very munificent. It is Svāminī's Hari, who steals (*haraṇa*) Her heart with this loving expertise. Two teardrops trickle from Rādhikā's eyes. How affectionately Śyāma helps Her onto Her sittingplace! How much love He has in His heart as He sits at Her soft

feet (sitting Himself on the pedestal) and takes them to His chest! Asking Her: "How have You come all the way here with these tender feet? The ground of Vraja is so hard!", He repeatedly looks at Svāminī's lotus feet that are greyed by dust. Tulasī understands the mood and brings a golden pitcher with water and a golden bowl. While Tulasī pours out the water Śyāma washes Svāminī's feet and dries them off with His yellow *dhotī*, while tears trickle from His eyes. Without the mercy of the *ācāryas* this cannot be experienced. By their grace the divine remembrance of this pastime will arise within the heart. The mind must be absorbed in this subject. How beautiful Śyāma is, sitting by Svāminī's feet! Svāminī lifts Kṛṣṇa up and seats Him next to Her. How beautiful Śyāma looks with these loving tears in His eyes! Holding Her cheek on His cheek, Svāminī asks Śyāma: 'Why do You love Me so much? I could not do anything for You! I have so many shortcomings! How many qualified girls are there not always waiting for You? How You could leave them all for an unfortunate girl like Me?" Śyāma stares at Svāminī's face. What He has gotten - that He's unaware of!

vipula pulakavara sveda sañcāra; cira thira nayane nīra anivāra
.....
āna āna saṅge raṅge bharu aṅga; ko koru anubhava prema taraṅga

(Rādhā Mohana dāsa)

"Their bodies are studded with big goosebumps and many sweatdrops and They stare at Each other while tears flow from Their eyes without interruption. Their limbs are filled with joy from Each other's touch; who can experience the waves of love?" They embrace Each other and stare at Each other while Svāminī holds Her head on Śyāma's left shoulder and keeps Her right arm behind His back. Their mouths are adorned with soft and tender smiles, that do not seem to end. Rūpa and Tulasī stare without blinking at the sweetness of the Yugala Kiśora, that look like the moon (Rādhā) and a blue Kuvalaya-lotus (Kṛṣṇa) together.[164]

kanakera latā yeno tamāle beḍilo;
nava ghana mājhe yeno bijurī paśilo
rāi kānu rūpera nāhiko upāma
kuvalaya cāṅda milalo eka ṭhāma
rasera āveśe duhu hoilā vibhora
dāsa ananta pahu nā pāolo ora

"They resemble a golden vine embracing a Tamāla tree or the lightning entering a fresh raincloud. There is no comparison to Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa's forms! They resemble a blue lotus flower and the moon in one place. They are both absorbed in *rasika* ecstasy and Ananta dāsa cannot find the limits to this!"

Suddenly the vision vanishes. It is as if the eyes have become void and Śrī Raghunātha dāsa weeps, prays and laments as follows:

śrī rūpa mañjari devi, sadā sevāmṛte ḍubi,
sukhi koro śrī rādhā-mādhave
tuyā kare kuñjeśvarī, nija bhuja vallari,
samarpilā pīriti svabhāve

"O Rūpa Mañjarī-devi! You are always immersed in a nectar-ocean of devotional service, always pleasing Śrī-Śrī Rādhā-Mādhava! In a loving mood Kuñjeśvarī Rādhā places Her vine-like arm in Your hand."

[164] These three paragraphs are narrated by Śrī Ānanda Gopāla Gosvāmī.

aparūpa nava gaurī, hari citta camatkārī,
anurāge aruṇa nayana
Kṛṣṇa daraśana āge, premābdhi taraṅge ḍube,
tanu mana sarvendriya gaṇa

"Your incomparable golden youthful form astonishes Hari's heart. When You see Kṛṣṇa before You with Your passionate reddish eyes, You are floating on waves of love with Your body, Your mind and all Your senses!"

he śrī rādhe mad īśvari, vilāsa bhūṣaṇa pari,
keli rasa samara taraṅge
abhisāre kobe dhani, loiyā yāibo tumi,
hari vibhūṣita keli kuñje

(Śrī Haripada Śila)

"O My Īśvari Śrī Rādhe! You are wearing all the (figurative) ornaments of Your pastimes, floating on the waves of the *rasa* of playful skirmishes as I take You on *abhisāra* (love-journey) to the *kuñja* which is decorated by Hari."

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VERSE 69:

SĀKAṀ TVAYĀ SAKHI NIKUÑJA-GṚHE SARASYĀḤ
SVASYĀS TAṬE KUSUMA-BHĀVITA BHŪṢAṆENA
ŚṚṄGĀRITAṀ VIDADHATĪ PRIYAM ĪŚVARĪ SĀ
HĀ HĀ BHAVIṢYATI MAD ĪKṢAṆA GOCARAḤ KIM

sākaṁ tvayā - with you; *sakhi* - O friend; *nikuñja* - grove; *gṛhe* - in a cottage; *sarasyāḥ* - of the lake; *svasyāḥ* - of you; *taṭe* - on the bank; *kusuma* - flowers; *bhāvita* - made of; *bhūṣaṇena* - with ornaments; *śṛṅgāritaṁ* - decorates; *vidadhatī* - performs; *priyam* - Her beloved; *īśvarī* - our goddess; *sā* - She; *hā hā* - O!; *bhaviṣyati* - will become; *mad* - my; *īkṣaṇa* - eyes; *gocaraḥ* - perceived; *kim* - whether.

My dear friend Rūpa Mañjari! When will I be able to see you with my mistress decorating Her dearest One with flower-ornaments in the grove-cottage on the bank of Her own lake ?

Explanations: Śrī Raghunātha's friendship with Śrī Rūpa is complete. Why does he suddenly perceive Śrī Rūpa Mañjarī? These visions are also real, and are as blissful as if he would directly meet her. In his Abhīṣṭa Sūcana Śrī Raghunātha writes: "May my desire for Śrī Rādhā's service be endowed with spotless thoughts of Śrī Rūpa and thus stay engaged in Śrī Rādhā's devotional service!" Together with Śrī Rūpa he wants to relish the vision of his

beloved deity. Śrī Rūpa and Tulasī have brought Svāminī to the *kuñja* which is decorated by Hari on the bank of Śrī Rādhākuṇḍa. How beautiful is the bank of Śrī Rādhākuṇḍa! *rādhākuṇḍa śyāmakuṇḍa tīrera ye śobhā; varṇana nā yāya rādhā-Kṛṣṇa manolobhā* "The beauty of the banks of Rādhākuṇḍa and Śyāmakuṇḍa cannot be described - it fascinates Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa!" The beloved's *kuṇḍa* is as dear to Kṛṣṇa as His beloved is. As soon as He sees it, He remembers Her! Because the *kuṇḍa* is endowed with Priyājī's qualities of dearness it bestows a love equal to Rādhā's on one who bathes there even once.

kuṇḍera mādhurī yeno rādhā madhurimā; kuṇḍera mahimā yeno rādhāra mahimā
sei kuṇḍe eka bāra yei kore snāna; tāre rādhā sama prema Kṛṣṇa kore dāna {C.C.}

"The *kuṇḍa* is as sweet as Rādhā's sweetness and the *kuṇḍa* is as glorious as Rādhā's glories. Kṛṣṇa gives a love equal to Rādhā's to anyone who bathes in this *kuṇḍa* even once." The meeting takes place in this *kuṇḍa*'s Madana Sukhadā *kuñja*. Svāminī's Hari, the enjoyer of the solitary grove, Rādhā's heart's friend, cannot be attained without taking exclusive shelter of Rādhā's lotus feet. Śrīla Narottama Ṭhākura has said: *vrajapura vanitāra, caraṇa āśraya sāra, koro mana ekānta koriyā* "O mind! Take exclusive shelter of the *gopīs* of Vraja. That is essential." *hari vibhūṣita keli kuñja* means "The *kuñja* was decorated by Hari's mere presence', or "Hari decorated this *kuñja* with His own hands". While personally decorating the trysting-*kuñja*, Svāminī's Hari thought: "My Priyājī will be so eager to play certain pastimes with Me after She sees how nicely I decorated this *kuñja*!" Adolescent Kiśora Kṛṣṇa is the transcendental youthful Cupid who is able to make the ordinary Cupid faint. Mounting the chariots of the *gopīs*, He agitates Cupid. *coḍi gopīra manoratha manamatha manamatha nāma dhare madana mohana* (C.C). Hence He is known as Madana Mohana. He who beautifies Rādhā's shoulder with His brilliant arm is our worshipable One. Rādhā Ramaṇa enjoys in the *kuñja*. This innocent adolescence (*mugdha kaiśora*) of Him makes Svāminī restless. Svāminī becomes mad when She subdues Śyāma in Their loveplay, but She is still unsatisfied, so She will teach Him some new games. Our Hero is under Her control, and Svāminī appropriates Him to Her own use. Rūpa Mañjarī and Tulasī are relishing the sweetness of this new pastime. This is the subject of the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas' meditation. Śrī Jīva Gosvāmī has written: "May Rādhā and Mādhava's sweetness attack my heart, so that we may not go astray."

gaura śyāma rucojjvalābhir amalair akṣnor vilāsotsavair
nṛtyantībhir aśeṣa mādana kalā vaidagdhya digdhātmabhiḥ
anyonya priyatā sudhā parimala stomonmadābhiḥ sadā
rādhā mādhava mādhurībhir abhitaś cittaṁ mamākramyatām

(Śrī Kṛṣṇa Sandarbhaḥ 501 Anuḥ)

"May Rādhā and Mādhava, who are shining with a golden and bluish splendor, whose eyes are dancing in a spotless festival of play, who are anointed with endless cleverness in erotic artistry, and who are greatly delighted by the nectarean fragrance of Their mutual dearness, attack my mind in all respects with Their sweetness."[165] Śrī Jīva Gosvāmī means to say: "May the indescribable sweetness of Rādhā and Mādhava's combined form arise in my heart in such a way that there will not be the slightest other perception. The word *ākranta* means: may this sweet dual form not leave my heart even slightly!" Śyāma and Gaurī's blue and golden effulgence illuminates the whole of Vṛndāvana. Śrī Rādhā's right eye and Śrī Kṛṣṇa's left eye are gladdened by wonderful movements due to meeting the beloved and it is as if Their indescribable bodily sweetness is dancing! Their bodies are adorned with limitless arts of ecstatic union such as embracing and kissing and so on. Śrī-Śrī Rādha-Mādhava's bodies

[165] The explanation of the last two paragraphs is by Śrī Ānanda Gopāla Gosvāmī.

are anointed with mutual love just as the bodies of other heroes and heroines may be anointed with *kuṅkuma*. In other words, the hearts in which this sweetness, that is gladdened by the nectar of mutual love, shines, remain scented by the fragrance of Śrī-Śrī Rādhā-Mādhava's love. In this eternal position the devotees reach their goal of *nikuñja sevā* and its complete relish. Again, within these pastimes of meeting there are again so many pastimes of separation, because without this duality of union and separation there would be no variety of relish. Therefore so many situations, like control of the superiors, going and coming in and out of the house and pique within the groves, occur.

Svāminī is not satisfied in the pastimes. Beautiful Śyāma's crown, pearl necklace, flowergarland and loincloth have all broken and fallen off, so Svāminī says: "Sundara! Just look at Your condition! Wait, let Me decorate You! I've spoiled Your looks, and I'll make You look nice again! Just sit down for a while!" Then She tells Rūpa Mañjarī: "Rūpa! Come here! We're going to pick some flowers!" Svāminī takes Rūpa along into the gardens and picks flowers of Her own choice there. Then She comes back into the *kuñja* and, along with Rūpa Mañjarī, begins to decorate Her Prāṇanātha with ornaments made of these flowers. Tulasī stands on one side of the *kuñja* and floats in oceans of bliss as she sees her Īśvarī's expertise in service. She thinks: "O Svāmini! Only through You such services are possible!" Meanwhile, because of Svāminī's touch Śyāma's body becomes adorned with ecstatic bodily symptoms such as sweatdrops, that obstruct Svāminī's service. Svāminī gives a hint to Tulasī to stand by Her Hero's side and to fan Him. Because of Tulasī's fanning Nāgara's sweatdrops dry up, but now Tulasī begins to fan with such humorous expertise that the breeze she makes causes Svāminī's clothes, like Her blouse, to loosen. Śyāma becomes agitated from seeing Rādhikā's sublime limbs half-covered and this causes Him to engage in activities that obstruct Svāminī's initial activities of dressing Him. Tulasī softly giggles, but still she won't stop her expert fanning. Svāminī then rebukes her with Her meaningful glances, as if saying: "Tulasi, how naughty you are! How can I decorate My Nāgara when you fan Him like that? Fan Him nicely, so that He will sit down peacefully!" After receiving Svāminī's sublime chastisement Tulasī blissfully finds a new way to fan Kṛṣṇa. Now she starts fanning in such a way that Svāminī's bodily fragrance enters into Śyāma's nostrils and His patience is destroyed once more. Blessed is this maidservant! Blessed is her service![166]

In order to relish these pastimes a devotee must awaken his *svarūpa*. "Even when a person like me is in the right environment (living in Vraja) it does not work! The mind is so stubborn and crooked!" In material consciousness nobody can approach Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa. One must enter into *svarūpāveśa*. *bhūta-śuddhi* (identification as a servant of the deity) is also required during deity-worship. *svarūpāveśa* is the *bhūta-śuddhi* of the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas. During mental service one must awaken one's *svarūpa*, and this is similarly required while practising other limbs of devotion. A practising devotee should always identify himself like this: "I am Rādhā's *kiṅkarī*!" No one can delight Svāminī and Śyāma as much as the *kiṅkarī*, for she actually establishes Their meeting, which makes Them very happy. They are so pleased with the *kiṅkarī* that They give even Themselves to her! Śrī Līlāśuka has said: *apāsya vṛndāvana pāda lāsyam upāsyam anyaṁ na vilokayāma* (Kṛṣṇa Karṇāmṛta) "We cannot see any other object of worship than the dancing feet (of Kṛṣṇa) in Vṛndāvana." Śrī Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja has written in his Sāraṅga Raṅgadā-commentary on this verse: *vṛndāvane pāda-lāsyaṁ yayos taṁ yuva-dvandva ratnaṁ tyaktvā anyam upāsyaṁ sevyaṁ na vilokayāma* "We don't look at any other object of worship than the jewel-like young pair of Vraja, that is devoted to dancing in Śrī Vṛndāvana." The loyalty of the *mañjarīs* goes even deeper! Allegiance to the great words of the Gosvāmīs leads to a steady wakefulness of one's *svarūpa*. Śrīman Mahāprabhu gave them (the Gosvāmīs) the duty: "Do *bhajan* and in this way teach the world!"

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[166] Narrated by Śrī Govinda Gopāla Gosvāmī (the second son of Śrīla Ānanda Gopāla Gosvāmī).

Śyāma's desire now also arises in Svāminī and Hari takes all obstacles to Rādhikā's union with Him, such as shame, fear and opposition, away. The word *śṛṅgāritam* in the text also means that Svāminī makes Śyāma fit once more for pastimes in the *śṛṅgāra rasa*, the erotic flavour. Svāminī has strung a flower garland, but there was no way to bind the ends together, so She binds them up behind His neck. Then She comes up before Him and asks Him: "How do You like Your garland?" Śyāma smiles slightly. Although He tries to find words to praise Svāminī's craftsmanship, He cannot express Himself. Their chests meet Each other when Svāminī tries to fix the garland behind Kṛṣṇa's neck and She bends over His shoulder. Because of this movement the garland gets smashed and Priyājī says: "Just see! I've ruined Your garland!", and starts stringing another one. Svāminī is decorating (*śṛṅgāritam*) the embodiment of spiritual erotic flavour (*śṛṅgāra rasa*) and thus immerses Him in *śṛṅgāra rasa*. While She puts a crown on Śyāma's head, Śyāma smiles slightly. "Oh what nectar! I can't allow that to fall and be wasted!", Svāminī says and goes forward to taste some of this nectar (by kissing Kṛṣṇa). When She does this, Kṛṣṇa's crown also falls off and She must put it on again with the help of Śrī Rūpa Mañjarī. Tulasī is astonished when she sees how expert Svāminī and Rūpa Mañjarī are in decorating.[167] Just then the vision ends and Śrī Raghunātha rolls on the bank of Rādhākuṇḍa, crying pitifully. Tulasī prays for *darśana* while Svāminī decorates Śyāma:

śrī rūpa mañjari sakhi! more koro doyā;
tava kṛpā nā hoile, kuñja-sevā nāhi mile,
sadā more deho pada-chāyā.

rādhākuṇḍa tīra śobhā, kuñja gṛhe mano lobhā,
tomā saha tāhāra mājhāre.
yabe rādhā mad īśvarī, prema sohāgete bhari,
prāṇa kānta vrajendra kumāra.

nānā puṣpa ābharaṇe, sājāibe sayatane,
ye aṅge yemon śobhā pāy
se rahasya līlā kobe, nayana gocara hobe,
jīvana sārthaka hobe tāy

"O *sakhi* Rūpa Mañjari! Without your grace the *kuñja-sevā* cannot be attained! Please always give me the shade of your lotus feet! In an enchanting cottage in a *kuñja* on the beautiful bank of Rādhākuṇḍa You and My mistress Rādhā lovingly and diligently decorate Her heart's lover Vrajendra Kumāra with different floral ornaments, so that His limbs become very beautiful. When will I make my life useful by seeing this intimate pastime with my own eyes ?" (Śrī Rasika-Candra Dāsa)

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VERSE 70:

ŚRUTVĀ VICAKṢAṆA MUKHĀD VRAJARĀJA SŪNOḤ
ŚASTĀBHISĀRA SAMAYAṀ SUBHAGE'TRA HṚṢṬĀ
SŪKṢMĀMBARAIḤ KUSUMA SAṄSKṚTA KARṆAPŪRA
HĀRĀDIBHIŚ CA BHAVATĪṀ KIM ALAṄKARIṢYE

167 Narrated by Śrī Ānanda Gopāla Gosvāmī

śrutvā - having heard; *vicakṣaṇa* - Vicakṣaṇa, a parrot; *mukhāt* - from his mouth; *vraja* - of Vraja; *rāja* - king; *sūnoḥ* - of the son; *śasta* - excellent; *abhisāra* - rendez-vous; *samayaṁ* - the time; *subhage* - O beautiful girl; *atra* - here; *hṛṣṭā* - joyful; *sūkṣma* - fine; *ambaraiḥ* - with garments; *kusuma* - flowers; *saṅskṛta* - created; *karṇapūra* - earrings; *hārādibhiḥ* - with necklaces and so on; *ca* - and; *bhavatīṁ* - You; *kim* - whether; *alaṅkariṣye* - will decorate.

O Subhage (beautiful or auspicious girl)! Can I joyfully decorate You with fine garments, floral earrings, necklaces and so after hearing from the parrot Vicakṣaṇa that the prince of Vraja has gone out for His excellent noontime meeting with You?

Explanations: This time the vision of Svāminī appears: "O Subhage! When can I arrange for Your *abhisāra* (love-journey) after hearing from the mouth of the parrot named Vicakṣaṇa that Śyāmasundara has already left for His *abhisāra*?" Tulasī calls Svāminījīu 'Subhage' here because she experiences Her fortune. He who is coveted by innumerable Vrajasundarīs, is Himself yearning for Śrī Rādhikā! The *dāsī* is proud of Rādhārāṇī's pride. There's no limit to Śyāma's craving for Rādhārāṇī!

vṛṣabhānu nandini, japaye rāti dini
bharama na bolaye ān.
lākho lākho dhani, bolaye madhura vāṇī,
svapane na pātaye kān.

"Day and night He murmurs: Vṛṣabhānu Nandini!, without saying anything else. Although hundreds of thousands of girls speak sweet words to Him, He does not listen to them even in dreams!"

'rā' kohi 'dhā' pahuṁ, kohoi na pāroi,
dhara dhari bohe lora
soi purukh maṇi, loṭāya dharaṇī puna,
ko koho ārati ora

(Govinda dāsa)

"He can only pronounce the first syllable of Your name, Rā, but out of ecstasy He can not pronounce the other one, 'Dhā'. His eyes carry streams of tears. That jewel of men rolls on the ground . Who can describe His distress?"

Śyāma is eager to the maximum to meet Rādhārāṇī, so He sends the parrot Vicakṣaṇa out with a message for Her. Although Vrajendra-nandana is the very form of full bliss, and He is the supreme shelter of all sounds, touch, forms, flavours and scents and the ocean of all *rasa*, even He is maddened by Rādhā's sweetness. *raso vai saḥ.. rasaṁ hy evāyaṁ labdhvānandī bhavati.. ko hy evānyāt kaḥ prāṇyāt yad eṣa ākāśa ānando na syāt; eṣa hy evānandayati saiṣānandasya mīmāṁsā bhavati; etasyaiva ānandasya anyāni bhūtāni mātram upajīvanti*: The Upaniṣads state that He is *rasa*, and the living being cannot be happy without Him; were He not ecstasy personified they would not desire to live. He is the limit of ecstasy and He makes all living beings in the world happy with even a drop of His transcendental bliss, yet even He is mad after meeting

Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī! In the *pūrva-rāga*-(falling in love) stage it is seen that one *sakhī* describes to Śrīmatī how Śyāma is suffering the pangs of separation from Her:

dhani dhani ramaṇi maṇi janama dhani tora
sab jana kāhnu, kāhnu kori jhuraye, se tuya bhāve vibhora
cātaka cāhi, tiyāsala ambuda, cakora cāhi rahu candā
taru-latikā, avalambanakārī, majhu mane lāgalo dhandā
keśa paśāri, kabahuṁ tuhu āchali, ura para ambara ādhā,
so sab sumari, kāhnu bhelo ākula, koho dhani ithe ki samādhā
hasaite kaba tuhuṁ, daśana dekhāiyāli, kore kora jorahi mora,
alakhite diṭhi kaba, hṛdaye pasārali, puna heri sakhī koili kora
etohu nideśa, koholo tohe sundari, jāni tohe koroho vidhāna
hṛdaya putali tuhuṁ, so śuna kalevara, kavi vidyāpati bhāna

"O fortunate girl! O Ramaṇi Maṇi, jewel of women! Your birth is blessed! Let everyone declare - it will satiate Kānu - He's mad after You! Normally the Cāṭaka bird craves the rainwater from the cloud, but the Kṛṣṇa-cloud thirsts for the Rādhā-Cāṭaka, normally the Cakora-bird survives on the moonlight, but now the Kṛṣṇa-moon thrives on the Rādhā-Cakora. Normally the vine needs a tree for support, but this Kṛṣṇa-Tamāla-tree needs the support of the Rādhā-vine - His mind is absorbed in You! He's panged remembering You combing Your hair with a garment covering half of Your breasts, and tells me: "O fortunate girl! What can I do? Kānu remembers everything, and it makes Him very upset - how You once smiled at Him and showed Him Your teeth - and declares: "When will She take Me in Her arms!?" Then He looked again and saw You holding the hand of Your *sakhī*. Your unseen glance entered His heart! So please go and tell this to Your Sundari - ask Her to do the needful!" Vidyāpati says: "You're the doll of His heart, but His body is empty!"

Śyāma does not love anyone as much as Her. The different *gopīs* only serve to create a variety of His loving pastimes with Śrīmatī, but He is totally subdued by Śrī Rādhā alone. This is a very relishable situation for Her maidservants. Śrī Rādhikā is fortunate, because He for whom all the *gopīs* are eager, is eager to meet Her. Therefore She is named Subhage, or fortunate girl, here and Tulasī is also proud of Svāminī's pride. There's no limit to Śyāma's desire for Svāminī, that's why He personally sent His pet parrot Vicakṣaṇa out with a message. Vicakṣaṇa delivers the message to Tulasī, who becomes most ecstatic!

śuka mukhe śunaite aichana rīta; sab aṅga pulakita camakita cita
kahaite gadgada kathahi bol; rāi mukha nirakhite antara dol

"When I hear this from the parrot's beak all my limbs are studded with goosepimples of excitement. I speak the message with a faltering voice and my heart swings when I behold Rāi's face!"

Tulasī thinks: "I won't tell Svāminī about Hari's message beforehand, otherwise She would run out of the door without having Her clothes and ornaments in the right place!"[168] Śrī Śukadeva described a similar scene of divine madness in his Śrīmad Bhāgavata (10.29.7), when Kṛṣṇa played His flute to inaugurate the Mahā-Rāsa dance:

limpantyaḥ pramṛjantyo'nyā añjantyaḥ kāś ca locane
vyatyasta vastrābharaṇāḥ kāścit kṛṣṇāntikaṁ yayuḥ

[168] The explanation in the last two paragraphs are by Śrī Ānanda Gopāla Gosvāmī

"Some *gopīs* were putting on make-up, others cleansed their bodies, others applied eyeliner to their eyes, others began to put on their garments, while yet again others went to Kṛṣṇa with these decorations all on the wrong places!" According to the Gosvāmīs this is possible with Śrī Rādhārāṇī, who is endowed with the ecstatic love called *mādana* and *modana* and also with Her personal girlfriends. The Mahājanas sing:

rāi sāje bāṅśī bāje nā poḍilo ula; ki korite kinā kore sab hoilo bhūla
mukure āṅcare rāi bāṅdhe keśa-bhāra; pāye bāṅdhe phulera mālā nā kore vicāra
karete nūpura pore jaṅghe pore tāḍa; galāte kiṅkiṇī pore kaṭitaṭe hāra
caraṇe kājala pore nayane āltā; hiyāra upore kore baṅkarāja pātā
śravaṇe koroye rāi beśara sājanā; nāsāra upore kore veṇīra racanā
vaṁśī-vadane kohe yaū bolihārī; śyāma anurāgera bālāi loiyā mori

"When Kṛṣṇa plays His flute Rāi forgets everything - what to do and what not to do! Rāi combs Her hair with Her mirror and ties Her flower garland to Her feet, without thinking. On Her hands She wears Her anklebells, on Her shanks Her bangles, on Her neck She wears Her waistbells and on Her waist She wears Her necklace. On Her feet She wears Her eyeliner, around Her eyes She wears Her footlac and on Her breasts She wears the Baṅkarāja Pātā-ornament. On Her ear Rāi places Her nosepearl and on Her nose She hangs the tassle of Her braid. Vaṁśī Vadana dāsa sings: "All glories to She who dies out of passionate love for Śyāma."

This ecstatic hilarity of love for Kṛṣṇa is called a *vibhrama alaṅkāra* in the *rasa-śāstras*:

vallabha prāpti velāyāṁ madanāveśa sambhramāt
vibhramo hāra mālyādi bhūṣā sthāna viparyayaḥ

"When the heroine, out of erotic ecstasy, puts on Her necklaces, garlands and other ornaments on the wrong place when it is time to meet the lover, it is called *vibhrama*." (Ujjvala Nīlamaṇi)

Śrī Kṛṣṇa only relishes the *prema*, though, and not the beauty of the dress and ornaments - *rūpa mātrena na hāryo hariḥ* : "Hari can not be captured only by the beauty of the form" (Lalita Mādhava). Kṛṣṇa takes great pleasure in correcting the *gopīs*' mistakes in dressing and ornamenting with His own hands, thus showing Himself to be completely subdued by love. But the *kiṅkarīs* want to send Rādhikā out nicely dressed and ornamented. That's why Tulasī thinks: "The parrot said that Śyāma is going out now to meet my Svāminī! First I will dress and ornament Her, and then I'll tell Her this!" It is auspicious even to think and talk about the expertise in devotional service of the *mañjarīs*. There will be no desire to look anywhere else. Why would the heart not be purified by thinking of the forms, qualities and pastimes of the Divine Pair? Can the *māyā-śakti* obstruct the Lord's *svarūpa śakti*? *bhajana* makes a new life for the devotee. When nothing changes in the heart and mind, then how will I understand if my *bhajan* is advancing? Dāsī Tulasī dresses and ornaments Śrīmatī for Her *abhisāra* with thin dresses, floral earrings, necklaces and other ornaments. How expertly she's doing this! Seeing this expertise of Tulasī Svāminī thinks: "Surely there must be some purpose to this ornamentation!" This causes Svāminī's natural beauty even to increase, and therefore Tulasī calls Her Subhage or Sundari in this verse. When the vision vanishes she prays for devotional service:

Kṛṣṇa abhisāra kāla, śunibo yokhon bhālo,
vicakṣaṇa śukera vadane.
tabe ati hṛṣṭā hoye, sūkṣma paṭṭa sāṭī loye,
porāibo tomāre yatane.

"When I clearly hear from the mouth of the parrot named Vicakṣaṇa that it is time for You to meet Kṛṣṇa, then I very blissfully take a thin silken *sārī* and carefully dress You with it."

karṇapūra raci phule, porāibo karṇamūle,
gole dibo kusumera hāra
he devi tomāre kobe, sājāibo ei rūpe,
diyā heno puṣpa alaṅkāra.

(Śrī Rasika-Candra Dāsa)

"I will make floral earrings and hang them on Your earlobes, and I will hang a flowergarland around Your neck. O Devi! When can I thus adorn You with floral ornaments?"

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VERSE 71:

NĀNĀ PUṢPAIR KVAṆITA MADHUPAIR DEVI SAṀBHĀVITĀBHIR
MĀLĀBHIS TAD GHUSṚṆA VILASAT KĀMA-CITRĀLIBHIŚ CA
RĀJAD DVĀRE SAPADI MADANĀNANDADĀBHIKHYA GEHE
MALLĪ-JĀTAIḤ ŚAŚIMUKHI KADĀ TALPAM ĀKALPAYĀMI

nānā - various; *puṣpaiḥ* - with flowers; *kvaṇita* - resounding; *madhupaiḥ* - by bumblebees; *devi* - O Goddess!; *sambhāvitābhiḥ* - filled; *mālābhiḥ* - with garlands; *tad* - that; *ghusṛṇa* - vermilion; *vilasat* - shining; *kāma* - erotic; *citrālibhiḥ* - with pictures; *ca* - and; *rājad* - glistening; *dvāre* - on the gate; *sapadi* - at the time; *madana* - Cupid; *ānandada* - giving joy; *ābhikhya* - known as; *gehe* - in the house; *mallī* - jasmines; *jātaiḥ* - abundance; *śaśimukhi* - moonfaced girl; *kadā* - when; *talpam* - bed; *ākalpayāmi* - I will make.

O Śaśimukhi (moonfaced girl)! O Devi (goddess)! When will I make a bed of Jasmine-flowers for You in the cottage in Madanānandada-kuñja (the grove which gives joy to Cupid) which has beautiful gates and erotic vermilion pictures hanging in it, hung with garlands made of various flowers surrounded by humming bees?

Explanations: When the vision (of the previous verse) disappears Śrī Raghunātha's heart cries out in deep anguish. His heart is completely swallowed by loyalty to Śrī Rādhā. In external consciousness he also prays for Rādhā's service. He's not satisfied with *smaraṇa* or visions - he wants Her directly! Even in external consciousness he feels a deep want of Svāminī, so he prays and laments as follows:

nirupama navagaurī navya kandarpa koṭi prathita madhurimormi kṣālita śrī nakhāntam
nava nava rucirāgair hṛṣṭam iṣṭair mithas tad vrajabhuvi nava yūnor dvandva ratnaṁ didṛkṣe
madana rasa vighūrnan netra padmānta nṛtyaiḥ parikalita mukhendu hrī vinamraṁ mitho'lpaiḥ

api ca madhura vācaṁ śrotum āvardhitāśaṁ vrajabhuvi nava-yūnor dvandva ratnaṁ didṛkṣe

(Nava yuva-dvandva didṛkṣāṣṭakam 3,4)

"I desire to see the two youthful jewels of Vraja, the tips of whose beautiful nails are washed by waves of sweetness of millions of matchless young golden girls and young Cupids, and who are always delighted by Their constant feelings of mutual love. I desire to see the two youthful jewels of Vraja, whose moonlike faces, that are endowed with lotus-like eyes that are dizzy of erotic *rasa* and cast slightly roving side-long glances, have slightly lowered out of shyness and humility, and whose desires for hearing Each other's sweet words constantly increase".

Śrī Raghunātha's heart floats on the waves of prayer into the kingdom of *līlās*. On the indication of the Vicakṣaṇa-parrot Tulasī takes eager Śrīmatī along to meet Kṛṣṇa in the Madana Sukhadā-kuñja on the bank of Śrī Rādhākuṇḍa. Svāminī forgets everything else when She remembers Śyāmasundara's happiness. The Mahājanas (great Bengali poets) sing:

dekho rāi koroto abhisāra!
śiriṣa kusuma jini, komala padatala,
vipathe paḍato anivāra

"Āhā! Just see Rāi's *abhisāra*! Her feet, that are more tender than Śiriṣa-flowers, irresistibly go astray."

sama vaya veśa, bhūṣaṇe bhūṣita tanu,
sakhīgaṇa saṅga hi meli.
gajagati nindi, gamana sumanthara,
kiye jita khañjana keli

"She is accompanied by Her *sakhīs* of similar age, dress and ornamentation. Her graceful steps put to shame an elephant's gait, and Her roaming glances defeat a hummingbird's play!"

yo thalakamala, paraśe ati komala,
jhāmara bhoi upacaṅka.
so ab yāhā tāhā, kaṭhina dharaṇī māhā,
ḍārata bhoi nihśaṅka.

"Although these very tender lotus feet turn pale in the excitement She continues to traverse over the earth's rough surface unmoved in Her determination and free from fear."

aichana bhāñti, milalo vara nāgarī,
kuñja mahā coli' gelo
heri rādhā mohana, ulasita locana,
ānanda sāgare ḍubi gelo

"In this way Nāgarī-maṇi Rāi reaches the trysting-*kuñja*. Rādhā Mohana's eyes rejoice when they see Her like this and he plunges within an ocean of bliss!"

The *kuñja* is beautified with different flowers, each one attracting buzzing bumblebees. The *kuñja* is filled with the humming of these bees. The vermilion of the erotic pictures that the *mañjarīs* have drawn has the red colour of passion and helps to incite lusty feelings. This *kuñja* that gives joy to Cupid is situated on the north-eastern side of Rādhākuṇḍa and is managed by Viśākhā-*sakhī*. On all four sides are Campaka-trees that permeate the *kuñja* with the fragrance of their red, green, yellow and blue flowers. Blue, yellow and green parrots,

cuckoos and bumblebees are singing their sweet songs there. It has four gates, one on each side, made of stakes with various wonderful flowers strung on them. The central yard of this *kuñja* is studded with jewels and shines like a sixteen-petaled lotus flower. There are Campaka-trees there with fragrant flowers and blue, white, yellow, red and green parrots, Pika-birds and bees are sweetly resounding there. This *kuñja*, which is covered over by Mādhavī-vines that entwine the branches of the Campaka-trees, shines like a palace! The door of this *kuñja* that gives erotic joy to the Divine Couple is made of flowers that are surrounded by thirsty humming bees that serve as doorkeepers, making sure that no intruders will come. Their humming is like the ringing of bells during the battle, Cupid's battle fought by the Yugala Kiśora. Viśākhā has placed her disciple-friend Mañjumukhī in charge of this *kuñja*. This Madana Sukhadā *kuñja*, which is situated on the bank of Śrī Rādhākuṇḍa, the very form of *prema-rasa*, always inundates Śrī-Śrī Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa in a flood of *vihāra-rasa*, the nectar of Their amorous pastimes.[169]

Śyāma is waiting for Svāminī in the *kuñja*, eagerly looking down the road for Svāminī to come. Sometimes He comes outside and looks if He can see Her coming over the pathways. His heart is startled with joy when He hears the dry leaves falling from the trees, because it makes Him think that His beloved is coming. Suddenly the bank of Rādhākuṇḍa becomes illuminated by a golden splendour. Śyāma comes out of the *kuñja*. There is no limit to His eagerness! In the distance He sees a golden effulgent form approaching which He has never seen before and He thinks to Himself:

kiṁ kānteḥ kula devatā kim uta vā tāruṇya lakṣmīr iyaṁ
sampad vā kim u mādhurī tanumatī lāvaṇya vanyā nu kim
kim vānanda taraṅginī kim athavā pīyūṣa dhārā śrutiḥ
kāntāsāv uta vā mamendriya gaṇanāhlādayanty āgatā

(Govinda Līlāmṛta 8, 109)

"Is this the family-deity of lustre? The goddess of youthful beauty? The opulence of sweetness personified? A flood of natural beauty? Or a river of bliss? Is it the source of a stream of nectar, or is it My beloved, who is coming here to delight My senses?" Passionate Rādhikā is also amazed to behold the sweet form of Śyāma. Is it He, for whom She has come here so eagerly? Or is it someone else? She thinks to Herself:

ayaṁ kiṁ kandarpaḥ sa khalu vitanuḥ kiṁ nu rasarāṭ
sa no dharmī kiṁ vāmṛta rasanidhiḥ so'ti vitataḥ
kim utphulla premāmara taruvaraḥ so'pi na caraḥ
sa vāsau mat preyān jayati mama bhāgyaṁ kva nu tathā

(Govinda Līlāmṛta 8, 112)

"Is this Cupid? No, because Cupid has no body! Is it a nectar ocean of spiritual flavour? No, because an ocean is limitless! Is it then an excellent blossoming tree of love from heaven? No, because a tree does not move! Is it then maybe My beloved, whom I am desiring for so long? Could I be so fortunate?"

After eager Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa meet and embrace Each other Tulasī seats them on a jewelled throne on the courtyard of the *kuñja*. Understanding Their feelings Tulasī had entered the *kuñja* and had prepared a bed of jasmine-flowers there. Although it is summer, all the other five seasons stand by to serve whenever necessary. Time, the sky, the wind, the sun

[169] Quoted by Śrī Ānanda Gopāla Gosvāmī from Govinda Līlāmṛta, Chapter 7.

and the moon all stand by to serve the *līlā*. There is no dead matter in Vraja whatsoever, everything and everyone serves the *līlā*. For instance, when Śyāmasundara opens the door of His Candra Śālikā (turret) He sees the full moon, shining like the face of the goddess of fortune, reminding Him of Rādhikā (*ramānanābham*). Eagerly He plays His flute beneath the Vaṁśīvaṭa-tree and dances the Rāsa with the *gopīs* for the duration of a night of Brahmā (millions of years). For the cowherders and the women of Vraja this was just twelve hours. What a service (of time)!

Tulasī has covered the bed, which she made of the petals of Jasmine-flowers, with a thin sheet, so that it will not fall apart while Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa make love there. It is a single bed, with a single pillow, also made of fresh flower petals. Why a single pillow? That will be understood when the Yugala Kiśora lies down there. The picture of that pastime had appeared in the *mañjarī's* mind beforehand. She will take the Yugala Kiśora to that bed. Cupid gives joy to the Yugala here, therefore this place is called Madana Sukhadā *kuñja*. Tulasī takes Śyāma and Svāminī into the *kuñja*, and when she comes outside she calls Svāminī Śaśimukhi, moonfaced girl. The moon with spots on his surface is called Śaśi.[170] Why did Tulasī compare Svāminī's spotless moon-like face with the stained globe of the moon? When Tulasī goes to make the bed Svāminī casts a glance at Śyāma's face in such a way that Śyāma becomes greedy and kisses Her eye. This leaves a black stain of eyeliner on Śyāma's lip. Seeing this Svāminī smirks, making Her cheeks blossom with it. Greatly attracted to the beauty of that cheek, Nāgara kisses it once more and thus leaves a stain of *kajjal* on it. That's why Svāminī is addressed as Śaśimukhi, or stained moon-face, in this verse.[171] As soon as Tulasī stretches out her hand to take Śyāma-Svāminī into the *kuñja* she doesn't catch anything anymore. The vision has stopped, so she anxiously prays:

vividha kusumāvali, parama ānande tuli,
yatane gāṅthiya tāra mālā
madhukara niṣevita, sei puṣpa mālā yoto,
ye mandira dvāre kore ālā

"In topmost bliss I pick different flowers and carefully make garlands of them that are enjoyed by bees, to decorate the gates of the *kuñja* with."

diyā kuṅkumera rekhā, kāma citrālaya āṅkā,
śobhā kore ye mandira dvāre.
madana ānanda prada, vicitrita ye sampad,
kobe sei śrī maṇi mandire.

ratana pālaṅka'pari, mallī puṣpa śayya kori,
dibo āmi ei abhilāṣa.
he śrī rādhe śaśimukhi, ei vāñchā purābe ki,
nivedoye raghunātha dāsa.

(Śrī Haripada Śila)

"With lines of *kuṅkuma* I draw a whole gallery of erotic pictures to beautify the gate of the *kuñja* with. When will I make a bed of Jasmines on a jewelled bedstead in a wonderfully opulent jewelled temple in the abode that gives joy to Cupid? This is my desire! "O moonfaced Rādhe!", Raghunātha Dāsa prays, "will You fulfill this desire of mine?"

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[170] The word *śaśi* means rabbit, and the moon is called *śaśadhara* because it carries the marks of a hare. Ed.

[171] Purport by Śrī Ānanda Gopāla Gosvāmī.

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VERSE 72:

ŚRĪ RŪPA MAÑJARI KARĀRCITA PĀDAPADMA
GOṢṬHENDRA-NANDANA BHUJĀRPITA MASTAKĀYĀḤ
HĀ MODATAḤ KANAKA-GAURI PADĀRAVINDA
SAMVĀHANĀNI ŚANAKAIS TAVA KIṀ KARIṢYE

śrī rūpa mañjarī - Śrī Rūpa Mañjarī; *kara* - hands; *arcita* - worshiped; *pāda* - feet; *padma* - lotus; *goṣṭhendra* - the king of Vraja; *nandana* - the son; *bhuja* - arm; *arpita* - offered; *mastakāyāḥ* - on the head; *hā* - O!; *modataḥ* - out of joy; *kanaka gauri* - golden girl; *pada* - feet; *aravinda* - lotus; *samvāhanāni* - massage; *śanakaiḥ* - gently; *tava* - Your; *kiṁ* - whether; *kariṣye* - I will do.

O Kanaka Gauri (golden girl)! Can I carefully and happily massage Your lotus feet while Śrī Rūpa Mañjarī massages the lotus feet of the prince of Vraja (Kṛṣṇa), in whose arm You have placed Your head?

Explanations: In his *svarūpāveśa* Śrī Raghunātha makes a bed of flowers for the Śrī Yugala to play on in the Madana Sukhadā-*kuñja*, and then he brings Them to the bed. Although the bed is made of stemless flowers it will be able to tolerate the powerful motion of the lovemaking.[172] When the practising devotees greedily hear, chant about and meditate on the expertise in devotional service of the eternally perfect *kiṅkarīs* they will become qualified to enter into *mañjarī bhāva sādhana. sei gopī bhāvāmṛta yāra lobha hoy; veda-dharma loka tyaji sei kṛṣṇe bhajay* (C.C.) "Anyone who becomes greedy for the nectar of *gopī-bhāva* will give up social and Vedic rules to worship Kṛṣṇa." Devotional practice must be mainly in allegiance to the *anugamya* (a person who worships in allegiance to the *gopīs* is called an *anugamya gopījana*, and the practitioner of *mañjarī bhāva* is a *gopī* who follows Śrī Rūpa Mañjarī and Rati Mañjarī) *gopījana*. The practising devotees should lay the ground in their hearts for the cultivation of *gopī bhāva*. A new (*rāgānugā*-) devotee, who is not blissfully and easily able to get a clear vision of his *siddha deha* or who has difficulties with the practice of *smaraṇa*, should first of all hear and chant the glories of *gopī-bhāva,* anxiously pray for *gopī-bhāva*, and strengthen the cultivation of *gopī-bhāva* within his heart by hearing, chanting and remembering the verses of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī's 'Utkalikā Vallari' and 'Kārpaṇya Pañjikā-stotram', Śrī Dāsa Gosvāmī's 'Vilāpa Kusumāñjali' and Śrī Ṭhākura Mahāśaya's 'Prema Bhakti Candrikā' and 'Prārthanā'. It is certainly very difficult to cultivate *gopī-bhāva* within the heart if we cannot catch the right mood. Śrī Dāsa Gosvāmī writes that the main means to live in Vraja and to serve the Śrī Yugala there is to remember Śrī Rūpa and Sanātana with love.

yadiccher āvāsaṁ vrajabhuvi sarāgaṁ prati janur
yuva dvandvaṁ taccet paricaritum ārād abhilaṣeḥ
svarūpaṁ śrī rūpaṁ saganam iha tasyāgrajam api

[172] See Utkalikā Vallari, verse 48.

sphutaṁ premnā nityaṁ smara nama tadā tvam śṛṇu manaḥ

(Manaḥ Śikṣā 3)

"O mind, listen! If you want to live in Vraja with great love, birth after birth, and if you want to attain the service of the youthful Couple of Vraja (Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa), then always lovingly remember and honour Śrī Svarūpa Dāmodara, Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī and his devotees as well as his older brother, Sanātana Gosvāmī!" By always remembering them one's *svarūpāveśa* will become strong and swallow one's external consciousness. Vraja Vihārī Śrī Kṛṣṇa makes even those who do not know how to love love. With the sweetness of His fluteplaying, the sweetness of His form, the sweetness of His pastimes and the sweetness of His love He infuses *prema* even within the trees, the vines, the animals, the birds, the stones and the water. Indeed, Govinda's matchless sweetness maddens all the moving and nonmoving living entities!

In the *kuñja* there is a bed made of fresh petals and a pillow made of flowers. Śyāmasundara keeps His head on this pillow, while Svāminī uses Vrajendranandana's left arm as Her pillow. Śrī Rūpa Mañjarī has lovingly given Tulasī the service of massaging Rādhikā's lotus feet, while she herself sits on the bed and massages Vrajendranandana's lotus feet. After They have made love Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa lie down facing Each other on Their single bed, sweetly smiling and looking at Each other and whispering so many romantic words to Each other. Sometimes They dash against Each other while They speak to Each other. They have lost notice that the maidservants are massaging Their feet. Rūpa and Tulasī understand Their mood and softly massage Their feet while listening to Their sweet words and looking at Their sweet forms.[173] Here the *mañjarīs* are clearly in advantage over the *sakhīs*, for they can render such intimate services without shame. Tulasī and Rūpa deeply relish the sweetness of the Yugala's erotic pastimes. *heri duhu lāvaṇi, duhu sambhāṣaṇa śuni, sakhī āṅkhi śravaṇa juḍāya* "I see Their beauty and I hear Their words, that please the ears and the eyes of the *sakhīs*!" In the presence of the *sakhīs* there is some hesitation, but the *mañjarīs* are nondifferent from the Yugala (in feeling), so they feel no hesitation at all! In the appendix of his Prīti Sandarbha Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī has written:

ālībhiḥ paripālitaḥ prabalitaḥ sānandam ālokitaḥ
pratyāśaṁ sumanaḥ phalodaya vidhau sāmodam āsvāditaḥ
vṛndāraṇya bhuvi prakāśa madhuraḥ sarvātiśāyi śriyā
rādhā mādhavayoḥ pramodayatu mām ullāsa kalpadrumaḥ

"May the great sweetness and beauty of Vṛndāvana's desire-tree of bliss named Rādhā-Mādhava, which is maintained, grown and ecstatically witnessed by the *sakhīs*, who are hoping for the blissful relish of its flowers and fruits, delight me!" The *mañjarīs* can truly relish the intense beauty of this desire-tree of bliss. Śrī Gaurasundara has descended especially to distribute these fruits to even the lowest wretch in this material world, therefore Śrī Jīva writes in the next verse:

tādṛśa bhāvaṁ bhāvaṁ prathayitum iha yo'vatāram āyātaḥ
ādurjana gaṇa śaranaṁ sa jayati caitanya vigrahaḥ Kṛṣṇaḥ

"All glories to Śrī Kṛṣṇa in the form of Śrī Caitanya, who descended to this world to distribute the devotion of this loving kind to even the most fallen souls, thus giving them His shelter." What could be a more deplorable thing than that the people of this age would be deprived of this great gift of Śrī Gaurasundara?

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[173] Purport by Śrī Ānanda Gopāla Gosvāmī.

Svāminī becomes languid (*rasālasa*) of relishing Śyāma-*rasa* (relishing erotic *rasa*, or tasting the nectar of making love with Śyāma). Slowly, slowly the Yugala becomes immersed in an ocean of blissful relish. The maidservant stares at the Divine Pair without blinking, totally absorbed in relishing Their sweetness. Śrī Rādhikā feels no shame before Her maidservants, and that makes them specially dear to Her. She can trust them completely. Śrī Rādhikā is called Kanaka Gauri in this verse because She has become spotlessly pure after She gave up all personal pride and submitted Herself to Her lover. After the Yugala Kiśora fall asleep Tulasī thinks: "What if I get up and stop massaging? They may wake up!", so she remains absorbed in gazing at the nectarean vision of Rādhā and Mādhava's sweetness. Tulasī keeps the lotus feet of her beloved Svāminī on her lap and massages them with her hair, for that is softer than with the bare hands. Suddenly the vision vanishes; "Hā Kanaka Gauri! Where are now these lotus feet of Yours, and when can I take these lotus feet on my chest and softly massage them in topmost bliss?"[174]

madana mohana, koribe śayana,
mallikā śayyāra'pore
śrī rūpa mañjarī, paramā sundarī,
caraṇa cāpibe kore

"Madana Mohana lies down on a bed of Jasmine-flowers, while most beautiful Śrī Rūpa Mañjarī presses (massages) His feet with her hands."

śuno go varāṅgi, kanaka gaurāṅgi,
prāṇanātha bhuja pāśe,
elāiyā aṅga, tumi uttamāṅga,
viśrāma koribe śeṣe

"Listen, O beautiful-formed golden girl, when You put Your head, which adorns Your body, to rest in the rope-like arm of the Lord of Your life, You finally fall asleep."

se sukha vilāse, parama hariṣe,
śyāma sohāginī rādhe
tomāra caraṇa, koro samvāhana,
dekhi duhu mukha cānde

(Śrī Haripada Śila)

"O Rādhe, Śyāma's beloved! When can I most blissfully massage Your feet and look at Your moonlike faces while You enjoy such blissful pastimes?"

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VERSE 73:

GOVARDHANĀDRI NIKAṬE MUKUṬENA NARMA
LĪLĀ VIDAGDHA ŚIRASĀṀ MADHUSŪDANENA
DĀNAC CHALENA BHAVATĪM AVARUDDHYAMĀNĀṀ

[174] Purport by Śrī Ānanda Gopāla Gosvāmī.

DRAKṢYĀMI KIṀ BHRUKUṬI DARPITA NETRA-YUGMĀM

govardhana - Govardhana; *adri* - Hill; *nikaṭe* - close by; *mukuṭena* - by the crown; *narma* - joking; *līlā* - play; *vidagdha* - clever; *śirasāṁ* - by the head; *madhusūdanena* - by Madhusūdana; *dānat* - from tax; *chalena* - on the pretext; *bhavatīm* - You; *avaruddhyamānāṁ* - being obstructed; *drakṣyāmi* - I will see; *kiṁ* - whether; *bhrukuṭi* - frowned eyebrows; *darpita* - proudly; *netra* - eyes; *yugmām* - couple.

Madhusūdana is the crest-jewel of clever pranksters! One day He obstructs Your path on the pretext of collecting tax from You as You are walking near Govardhana Hill! Will I then see Your proud eyes crowned with frowned eyebrows?

Explanations: This time Śrī Raghunātha perceives the Dāna-*līlā*, Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa's quarrel over the tax on *ghī* by Govardhana Hill. The pastimes follow Each other like a stream of sweet visions. Within the relish of these sweet pastimes is also the relish of sweet devotional services. "Madhusūdana is the crestjewel of clever pranksters! One day He obstructs Your path on the pretext of collecting tax from You as You are walking near Govardhana Hill! Will I then see Your proud eyes crowned with frowned eyebrows?" In the Dāna-*līlā* the loving quarrels of the Divine Pair are relishable. Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī and Śrīla Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī have described this pastime in their books 'Dāna Keli Kaumudī' and 'Dāna Keli Cintāmaṇi'. For the welfare of his son Balarāma Vasudeva has engaged Bhāgurī Muni and other sages in performing a fire-sacrifice near Govinda Kuṇḍa (a lake at the base of Govardhana Hill). The sages have promised the *gopīs* that all their desires would be fulfilled if they will carry the required *ghī* (clarified butter) to the sacrificial ground, and this promise is announced all over Vraja. Śrī Rādhikā hears the news from Her pet parrot Sūkṣmadhī and She sets out from Rādhākuṇḍa with Her *sakhīs* like Lalitā, Viśākhā, Citrā and Campakalatā and Her *mañjarīs* like Rūpa and Tulasī. All these *gopīs* carry golden *loṭās* with fresh *ghī* on red silken rolls on their heads. The *gopīs* are so sublimely dressed and ornamented that the base of Govardhana Hill shines with their golden effulgence. '*dāna chole bheṭibo kānāi*!' We will meet Kṛṣṇa on the pretext of donating *ghī*! Śrī Rādhikā casts Her glances here and there, thinking: Where is that Lord of My Life?[175] Then, and there:

jñātvā tāsāṁ gamanam aciraṁ kīra-varyasya vaktrāt
smitvā narma priya sakhagaṇair āvṛtaḥ sāvadhānaḥ
śailendrasyopari parilasann udbhaṭa śyāma-vedyāṁ
ghaṭṭīpaṭṭam vidadhad atulam vallabhādhīśa sūnuḥ

(Dāna Keli Cintāmaṇi)

"Śrī Rādhā is swiftly coming this way with Her girlfriends!" Hearing this message from a parrot, Gopendranandana (Kṛṣṇa) smiled slightly, climbed on top of Govardhana Hill with His friends like Subala and Madhumaṅgala at the high spot known as Śyāma Vedī, and erected a matchless toll station there." When Śrī Rādhikā eagerly arrives at the Mānasi Gaṅgā-lake

[175] Narration by Śrī Ānanda Gopāla Gosvāmī.

with Her girlfriends, She remembers Śyāma as She sees the blackbees humming around the blossoming lotus flowers in the lake. Śrīmatī becomes overwhelmed by ecstasy when She hears Śyāma's very sweet flute playing and says:

tapasyāmaḥ kṣāmodari varayituṁ venuṣu janur
vareṇyaṁ manyethāḥ sakhi! tad akhilānāṁ sujanuṣām
tapaḥ stomenoccair yad iyam urarīkṛtya muralī
murārāter bimbādhara madhurimānaṁ rasayati
(Dāna Keli Kaumudī)

"O friends! Let us perform austerities to take our next births in a bamboo-family! Don't think that this is an ordinary birth! It is the highest birth in this world, because bamboo-flutes alone can relish the nectar of Murāri's Bimbafruit-like lips!" Slowly Śrī Rādhikā walks on, immersed in talking about Kṛṣṇa with Her friends, Her vine-like body studded with flower-like emotions. Vṛndā shows Rādhikā how beautiful Śyāma looks on top of the hill and in amazement Śrīmatī says:

prapannaḥ panthānaṁ harir asakṛd asmann nayanayor
apūrvo'yaṁ pūrvaṁ kvacid api na dṛṣṭo madhurimā
pratīke'py ekasya sphurati muhur aṅgasya sakhi yā
śriyas tasyāḥ pātuṁ lavam api samarthā na dṛg iyam

(Dāna Keli Kaumudī)

"O Vṛnde! Hari has crossed the path of My eyes many times before, but I have never seen Him in this unprecendentedly sweet way before! My eyes have never been able to drink even a drop of the nectarean beauty of even one of His limbs!" The *sakhīs* are absorbed in the sweetness of the Yugala Kiśora and they say to each other:

dekho sakhi! aparūpa raṅga
nirupama prema- vilāsa rasāyana,
pibaite pulakita aṅga

"Behold, O *sakhī*, that extraordinary love! They drink the elixir of Their matchless loving pastimes and Their hairs stand on end of ecstasy!"

dūra saie daraśana, animikha locana,
vahatahi ānanda nīra.
ānanda sāyare, ḍubalo duhu jana,
bahu kṣaṇe bhai gelo thira.

"They stare at Each other from afar with unblinking eyes, that are filled with tears of ecstasy. They drown in a pool of bliss and They only become steady again after a long time."

Surely Śrī Dāsa Gosvāmī's description of Śrī Kṛṣṇa's seeing Rādhā in his 'Dāna Keli Cintāmaṇi' is unrivalled in this world! When Kṛṣṇa sees Rādhikā, He says in amazement:

phulla campaka vallikāvalir iyaṁ kiṁ no na sā jaṅgamā
kiṁ vidyullatikātatir na hi ghane sā khe kṣaṇa dyotinī
kiṁ jyotir laharī sarin nahi na sā mūrtiṁ vahet tad dhruvaṁ
jñātaṁ jñātam asau sakhīkula vṛtā rādhāṁ sphuṭaṁ prāñcati

(Dāna Keli Cintāmaṇi 19)

"Is this a blossoming vine of Campaka-flowers? No, because that does not move! Then is it a vine of lightning? No, because that is very fickle and disappears in the clouds again in a moment! Then is it a river of effulgence? No, because that has no form, and this being certainly has! Then I know for sure that it is Rādhā, approaching Me with Her friends!" Then He also says:

gaurī śrī vṛṣabhānu vaṁśa vilasat kīrti-dhvaja kīrtidā
garbhāntaḥ khani ratna kānti laharī śrīdāma puṇyānujā
prāṇa preṣṭha sakhī nikāya kumudollāsollasāc candrikā
mat prāṇoru śikhaṇḍi vāsa vaḍabhī seyaṁ svayaṁ rādhikā

"It is Rādhikā Herself, whose limbs are golden, who is the beautiful banner of fame for the family of king Vṛṣabhānu, who is a wave of splendid jewels from Kīrtidā's mine-like womb, the virtuous younger sister of Śrīdāma, the moonlight that soothes Her lily-like girlfriends and the sitting place for My great peacock-like heart!" (Dāna Keli Cintāmaṇi 21)

The use of metaphors, the depth of the feelings and the loveliness of the composition of these two verses are greatly relishable for the *rasika* (aesthetic) devotees. The choice of the most lovely and exquisite words and the self-manifest feelings in them are the extraordinary treasure of Śrīla Dāsa Gosvāmī. Such a special composition is very rare in Vaiṣṇava-literature and it stands alone in its great wonder.

They see Each other, and this causes a powerful wave of ecstasy in the river-like heart of Bhāvamayī (all-emotional Rādhikā). She tells Lalitā: "Walk slowly, I'm feeling pain in My feet!", but Lalitā jokingly replies: "You don't feel pain in Your feet! There is a big black rock (Kṛṣṇa) in Your mind that gives You pain! You can still walk on with pain in Your feet, but not with pain in Your heart!" In this way the *sakhīs* enjoy joking with Śrī Rādhikā. How amazing is Nāgara's tax-collector's dress, as He stands there with Madhumaṅgala and Subala! Subala says: "O cowherd girls! Where are you going with these *ghī*-pots on your heads, ignoring this toll station?" The *gopīs* don't even move an eyebrow and proudly walk on. Śyāma Nāgara notices every step that Svāminī makes. The jingling of Her anklebells sprinkles His ears with nectar and He comes forward, enchanting the *gopīs* with His soft smile, His glances and the flute in His hand. The fish-like eyes of the *sakhīs* and *mañjarīs* swim in the ocean of the Yugala's sweetness. How beautifully Svāminī moves Her eyes when Kṛṣṇa blocks Her path and says: "Pay Me My tax!"[176] Śrīpāda Līlāśuka says:

yāni tac caritāmṛtāni rasanā lehyāni dhanyātmanāṁ
ye vā śaiśava cāpala vyatikarā rādhāvarodhonmukhāḥ
yā vā bhāvita veṇu gīta gatayo līlā mukhāmbhoruhe
dhārā vāhikayā vahantu hṛdaye tāny eva tāny eva me

"O Kṛṣṇa! Let Your nectarean pastimes, that are relished by the tongues of the blessed souls, such as Your naughty childhood games, Your blocking Rādhā's way (as in the Dāna-*līlā*) and the emotional flute-songs that emanate from Your playful lotus-like mouth, continuously be manifest in my heart." (Śrī Kṛṣṇa Karnāmṛta - 106) This pastime of obstruction is most relishable for the fortunate souls. This can only be understood by someone who has awoken his *siddha svarūpa*. Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī prays to Śrī Rādhā's *kila kiñcit*-glance for the welfare of the world. Once even a drop of this sweetness has entered the heart and mind of a practising devotee he cannot withdraw his heart from its seizure anymore.

[176] Narration by Śrī Ānanda Gopāla Gosvāmī.

First Kṛṣṇa talks with the *sakhīs* while Svāminī remains silent and grave. Sometimes Śyāma comes up to Rādhikā to touch Her and says: "Pay Me with Your youthful beauty!" How beautifully Svāminī then frowns Her eyebrows, that defeat the strength of millions of Cupid's arrows! Śyāma-Nāgara is enchanted and Tulasī also floats in an ocean of spiritual flavour when she sees the beauty of these eyes. The *sakhīs* sarcastically say: "O! Is there also a levy on youth nowadays ?" "Yes", Śyāma says, "these things are taxed at this toll-station! Svāminī walks on, ignoring Śyāma, who then says: "Do You dare to ignore Me? Don't get too offensive now!"

Kṛṣṇa-kuṇḍalinaś caṇḍi kṛtaṁ ghaṭṭayānayā
phutkṛti kriyayāpy asya bhavitāsi vimohitā

(Dāna Keli Kaumudī)

"O Caṇḍi (hot-tempered girl)! There's no need trying to chase away a black snake (*Kṛṣṇa kuṇḍalī*)! When He simply hisses at You, You will be enchanted! (Or: When Kṛṣṇa, who wears nice earrings (*kuṇḍala*), simply kisses You, You'll be enchanted)" Svāminī proudly frowns Her eyebrows and says:

dharṣane nakula strīṇāṁ bhujaṅgeśaḥ kṣamaḥ katham
yad eto daśanair eṣa daśannāpnoti maṅgalam

(Dāna Keli Kaumudī)

"How will a snake be able to attack a *nakula strī* (she-mongoose)? She will simply bite him back! It will not be a good opportunity for that snake! (Or: Why wouldn't You be able to ravish housewives? Today is a very good opportunity for that!)" In this way Svāminī shows Her inner desires, like a rose covered by a thin sheet. Her grave feelings are covered by Her external show of disrespect. How clever She is in *rasika* joking pastimes, just like Śyāma! The clever *sakhīs* nourish the pastimes of the Yugala Kiśora. Dānī Rāya (Kṛṣṇa) stops the *gopīs* on the way and Lalitā says: "I am Bhairavī (a manhating goddess), see if You have the guts to touch me!" Śyāma is not able to touch her. Pointing at Svāminī, He tells the *sakhīs*: "If You don't have any money on You now, You can keep only Her with Me and go on yourselves!" The *sakhīs* say: "That we cannot do!" Śyāma says: "Then let Me see how You will go (without My consent)!" Then the *sakhīs* say: "Rādhe! Then we're going, You can stay here!" Kṛṣṇa says: "Where's the *ghī* for the sacrifice?", forcibly grabs it from their pots and starts to eat it. When Kṛṣṇa touches the *ghī*, after pulling the pots from the *gopīs*' heads, the *sakhīs* say: "This *ghī* is spoiled! When a dirty boy like You touches it, it can not be offered anymore! Actually, when one even touches someone like You one should take a bath!" Saying this, the *sakhīs* laugh and go on their way. In this way Śrī Rādhikā and the *rasika* bee Madhusūdana exchange so many humorous words in this celebrated Dāna-*līlā*, or tax-pastime. After this loving quarrel Tulasī arranges for Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa's loving pastimes in a *kuñja*.[177]
Śrī Haripada Śila sings:

narma līlā sukauśalī, śrī govinda vanamālī,
govardhanera dāna ghāṭi pathe
dekhi tomā vinodini, rasikendra cuḍāmaṇi,
dāna chale patha āvaribe

"Śrī Govinda Vanamālī is expert in joking pastimes! O Vinodini ! When He sees You on the road by Govardhana's Dāna Ghāṭī (toll-station), the crownjewel of *rasikas* stops You on the pretext of levying tax from You!"

[177] These three paragraphs are narrated by Śrī Ānanda Gopāla Gosvāmī.

rasikā mukuṭa maṇi, mahābhāva svarūpiṇī,
viṁśatī bhāva pori alaṅkāra.
dāḍāibe bhaṅgī kori, hari citta camatkārī,
netrāñcale bhrukuti tomāra

"You are the crownjewel of *rasika* girls, the very form of *mahābhāva*, adorned with twenty ornaments of ecstatic love! You astonish Hari's heart with the gestures of Your eyes and with Your frowned eyebrows, as You are standing there."

dekhi kila kiñcita, bhāvera taraṅga yoto,
avicala nāgara tribhaṅga.
ei-nā veśe nava gaurī, śyāma naṭavara hari,
dekhibo ki sahacarī saṅga ?

"When He sees all the waves of Your *kila kiñcita*-mood, Your lover stands motionlessly in His threefold bending form. O Nava Gauri (young golden girl)! When can I see You with Śyāma Naṭavari Hari (Kṛṣṇa, the best of dancers) who is dressed as a tax-collector, and Your girlfriends there all together?"

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VERSE 74:

TAVA TANUVARA GANDHĀSAṄGI VĀTENA CANDRĀ-
VALI KARA KṚTA MALLĪ-KELI-TALPĀC CHALENA
MADHURA-MUKHI MUKUNDAṀ KUṆḌATĪRE MILANTAṀ
MADHUPAM IVA KADĀHAṀ VĪKṢYA DARPAṀ KARIṢYE

tava - Your; *tanu* - body; *vara* - excellent; *gandha* - fragrance; *āsaṅgi* - touching; *vātena* - by the wind; *candrāvali* - Candrāvalī; *kara* - hand; *kṛta* - made; *mallī* - jasmine; *keli* - play; *talpāt* - from the bed; *chalena* - by trick; *madhura* - sweet; *mukhi* - face; *mukundaṁ* - Mukunda; *kuṇḍa* - the lake; *tīre* - on the shore; *milantaṁ* - meeting; *madhupam* - a bee; *iva* - just like; *kadā* - when; *aham* - I; *vīkṣya* - see; *darpaṁ* - proud; *kariṣye* - I will do.

O Madhura-mukhi (sweet-faced girl)! When the wind carries Your excellent bodily fragrance to Candrāvalī's handmade playbed, where Mukunda enjoys with her, Kṛṣṇa finds a clever excuse to meet You on the shore of Your lake (Rādhākuṇḍa), like a bumblebee leaving an inferior flower. When will I proudly witness this?

Explanations: In the previous verse Śrī Raghunātha perceived the Dāna-*līlā*, in which he relished the sweetness and the beauty of *ādhīśvarī* Rādhikā's eyes, crowned with frowned eyebrows. When this vision vanishes he laments: "When will I see these eyes again?" The deity

shows Herself once and then disappears again. Thus Svāminī plays hide-and-seek with Her surrendered maidservant. Just as a human body may be carried to the shore by the flood and again drawn back into the ocean by the ebb, similarly Śrī Raghunātha Dāsa's heart and mind are sometimes brought to Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa by the waves of *milana* (meeting) and sometimes drawn away again by the waves of *viraha* (separation). This causes all the lamentations. Separation from Rādhārāṇī is not like separation from the Lord. "My vine-like body is burning in the forest fire of separation from You. Please revive me with a momentary nectarean glance!" There is great bliss in this burning prayer. It is a burning which is anointed with the *rasa* of *ānanda*. *viraha* has been called a *rasa*. *rasasyānanda dharmatvāt* (Alaṅkāra Kaustubha) "*rasa* is blissful by nature." Hence there is also great bliss in love-in-separation. *ei premā yāra mone, tāra vikrama sei jāne, yeno viṣāmṛta ekatra milana* (C.C.) "Only a person who has this love in the heart can understand its power. It's like the blending of poison and nectar."

The heart of Śrī Raghunātha, that is suffering from separation, has gone once more to the kingdom of *līlās*. In his *svarūpāveśa* he helps Svāminī to reach the bank of Rādhākuṇḍa to meet Kṛṣṇa there. Premamayī is so much in ecstasy that She must lean on Tulasī's shoulder while they rush forward. How wonderfully beautiful this is!

coloite caraṇera, saṅge colu madhukara,
makaranda pāna ki lobhe
saurabhe unamata, dharaṇī cumbaye koto,
yāhā yāhā pada-cihna śobhe

"Bumblebees are flying along with Her moving lotus feet. How greedy they are to drink the honey from these lotus feet! Maddened by their fragrance they kiss the ground, wherever Her footprints are beautifying it."

kanaka latā jini, jini saudāminī
vidhira avadhi rūpa sāje
kiṅkiṇī raṇaraṇi, baṅkarāja dhvani,
coloite sumadhura bāje

"She defeats the golden vine, She defeats the lightningstrike! The Creator has created the limit of bodily beauty! How sweetly Her waistbells and anklebells jingle while She walks."

haṁsa-rāja jini, gamana sulāvaṇi,
avalambana sakhī-kāndhe
ananta dāse bhaṇe, cololi nikuñja vane,
pūrāite śyāma mana sādhe

"Her gait defeats the loveliness of the king of swans as She leans on the shoulder of a girlfriend. Ananta dāsa sings: "She has gone to the *nikuñja*-forest to fulfill Śyāma's desires."

In this way Tulasī takes Premamayī along to the *saṅketa-kuñja* (trysting-grove) on the bank of Śrī Rādhākuṇḍa. Still Nāgara has not arrived in the *kuñja*. Śrīmatī waits for Her Nāgara in the condition of a Vāsaka Sajjikā:

svavāsaka vaśāt kānte sameṣyati nijaṁvapuḥ;sajjīkaroti gehaṁ ca yā sā vāsaka sajjikā
ceṣṭā cāsyāḥ smarakrīḍā saṅkalpo vartma-vīkṣaṇam; sakhī-vinoda vārtā ca muhur dūtīkṣanādayaḥ

"A heroine who has received a hint from her hero to meet him in a certain trysting-place, who eagerly waits there for him and meanwhile decorates herself and the grove is called a *vāsaka sajjikā*. The activities of such a heroine are planning the erotic games with her hero,

looking out for him to come, discussing blissful topics with her girlfriends and constantly looking out for girl-messengers to come." (Ujjvala Nīlamaṇi, Nāyikā-bheda 76, 77)

Nāgara is too late and Tulasī looks out for Him again and again. The practising *rasika* devotees of Vṛndāvana should also always meditate on themselves as assisting Svāminī in this way, always staying by Her side. The practising devotee should always float along on the waves of Svāminī's happiness and distress. Without being completely absorbed in *svarūpāveśa* these feelings cannot be experienced. "Although a person like me is actually living in Vṛndāvana he does not have any experience. I am always absorbed in bodily consciousness. Not even in dreams I think of myself as Rādhā's maidservant! There's no other way than surrender". Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas should take exclusive shelter of the lotus feet of the *gopīs*. *vrajapura vanitāra, caraṇa āśraya sāra, koro mana ekānta koriyā* (Ṭhākura Mahāśaya) "O mind! The essential thing is to take exclusive shelter of the lotus feet of the Vraja-*gopīs*!" Śrīpāda Prabodhānanda Sarasvatī has said: *kadā syāṁ śrī rādhe cakita iha vṛndāvana bhuvi* (Rādhā Rasa Sudhānidhi 211) "O Śrī Rādhe! When can I live in Vṛndāvana in total (devotional) anxiety?" Śrī Kṛṣṇa is late for His appointment and Svāminī becomes more and more upset.

anāgasi priyatame cirayaty utsukā tu yā; virahotkaṇṭhitā bhāva vedibhiḥ sā samīritā
asyās tu ceṣṭā hṛttāpo vepathur hetu-tarkaṇam; aratir vāṣpa mokṣaśca svāvasthā kathanādayaḥ

"When the innocent beloved did not show up for a long time the heroine becomes very anxious out of separation from Him. In that condition she is called an '*utkaṇṭhitā nāyikā*' by the knowers of *rasa*. Her activities consist of a burning heart, shivering, speculating about why he does not show up, illness, shedding tears and speaking about her own situation." (Ujjvala Nīlamaṇi Nāyika 79, 80) The Mahājanas describe the lamentations of an '*utkaṇṭhitā*' as follows:

bandhura lāgiyā, śeja vichāyaluṁ,
gāṅthilu phulera mālā
tāmbūla sājāluṁ, dīpa ujāraluṁ,
mandira hoilo ālā

soi, pāche e sob hoibe ān!
se heno nāgara, guṇera sāgara,
kāhe nā milalo kāna

"I made the bed for My lover and strung a flowergarland for Him. I prepared betel leaves and I lit the lamps. I made the bower-house very beautiful; but, O My friend, all this will turn out differently! I will not meet My hero, Who is an ocean of attributes!"

śāśuḍi nanade, vañcanā koriyā,
āiluṁ gahana vane
boḍo sādha mone, e rūpa yauvane,
milabo bandhura sane

patha pāne cāhi, koto nā rahibo,
koto prabodhibo mone,
rasa śiromaṇi, āsibo ekhoni,
dīna caṇḍī dāsa bhaṇe

"I deceived My mother-in-law and My sister-in-law to come into the deep forest, and with great effort I decorated My beautiful youthful body to meet My lover. I'm looking down the road for Him to come, telling My mind that this crown-jewel of relishers will certainly come now. Thus sings the wretched Caṇḍī Dāsa."

Kṛṣṇa, while on the way to meet Rādhikā, had met Śaibyā and Padmā, the girlfriends of Rādhikā's rival Candrāvalī, who had taken Him to Candrāvalī's *kuñja*, where a bed of jasmine-flowers made by Candrāvalī's own hands was waiting for Him. When Śrī Rādhikā, waiting in Her own *kuñja*, became desperate, the wind of Vṛndāvana thought to himself: "Let me see what I can do!", and became Rādhikā's servant by carrying Her sublime fragrance into Candrāvalī's *kuñja* and straight into Madhusūdana's nostrils. Śyāmasundara became startled, suddenly got up from Candrāvalī's hand-made bed of flowers and told her: "Dearest One! I completely forgot! My mother told Me to do something for her and I just went off without finishing that duty! I have to go right now!" Naive Candrāvalī, seeing Kṛṣṇa's anxiety, said: "Go, and come back as soon as You've finished Your duties!"[178] Our Hero then promptly followed Rādhikā's excellent fragrance, like a bee (*madhupam iva*) who leaves all the other flowers to search for a blooming golden honey-filled lotus flower. That is the glory of Her exclusive love! Śrī Viśvanātha Cakravartī says in Rādhārāṇī's name:

tatrāpi mayyatitarām anurajyatīti loka pratītir api na hy anṛtā kadāpi
yat prema merum iva me manute parāsāṁ no sarṣapaiś tri caturair api tulyam eṣaḥ

"Although all the *gopīs* have causeless love for Kṛṣṇa, still He is mostly attached to Me. All the people know that. That can never be false. He considers My love to be endless like the Mount Meru, whereas He does not compare the love of the other *gopīs* for Him even with three or four mustard-seeds." (Prema Sampuṭa - 62) Actually, Candrāvalī has been made a rival equal to Śrī Rādhā in the *līlā* by *rasa* itself just to make Kṛṣṇa relish Śrī Rādhā's different delectable moods like *utkaṇṭhā, māna* (pique), and *kalahāntaritā* (girl repenting having picked a quarrel). Actually Śrī Rādhā's love is beyond comparison.

Tulasī stands at the gate of the *kuñja* when Kṛṣṇa arrives there and says: "Tulasi, here! I have come! Arrange for My meeting with Rādhā!" Tulasī admonishes Him by saying: "Where do You come from? Where have You been all this time? Svāminī is very upset and is crying because of You! Tell Me the truth, otherwise I won't let You meet Her!" Kṛṣṇa shortly and honestly explains to Tulasī why He is delayed, and when Tulasī hears that He has been to Candrāvalī's *kuñja*, she becomes very upset and says: "Oḥ! That's why You're so late! Go! Go there where You came from! I cannot let You meet Her! I will sing Your glories to Svāminī!"[179] Our Hero then offers hundreds of prayers to Tulasī with folded hands until she finally allows Him to come in and see Rādhikā. How complete is the *mañjarīs*' control over Śrī Kṛṣṇa! Because Nāgara is making so many endeavours, and because Nāgara and Nāgarī-*maṇi* are so eager to meet, Tulasī finally allows Them to meet. Tulasī's heart is filled with pride when she sees that the love-fragrance of Svāminī drew Nāgara right out of Candrāvalī's *kuñja* back into Her own domain. "Kṛṣṇa cannot stay anywhere else for even a moment without my Svāminī. Therefore Kṛṣṇa is ours!" This pride fills Tulasī's heart. *garvam ācakṣate darpaṁ vihārotkarṣa sūcakam* (U.N. Harivallabhā 26) "This is pride over seeing the superiority of Kṛṣṇa's enjoyment with the heroine (of one's own party over Kṛṣṇa's enjoyment with the enemies' party)." In his 'Ujjvala Nīlamaṇi' (Hari Vallabhā 27) Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī gives the following example of this pride:

vidmaḥ puṇyavatī śikhāmaṇim iha tvām eva harmye yayā
nīyante śarad indu dhāma dhavalāḥ svapnotsavena kṣapāḥ
ko'yaṁ naḥ phalati sma karma viṭapī vṛndāṭavī kandare
śyāmaḥ ko'pi karī karoti hṛdayonmādena nidrā kṣayam

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[178] Narrated by Śrī Ānanda Gopāla Gosvāmī.

[179] Narrated by Śrī Ānanda Gopāla Gosvāmī.

"One day the *gopīs* were listening to Nāndīmukhī (a learned *brāhmaṇa*-girl) reciting the Purāṇas. When Padmā saw her rival Lalitā dozing off, she sarcastically laughed, so Lalitā told her: "Sakhi! You are the crown jewels of fortunate girls, because you can happily sleep on your balconies in the moonlit autumn-nights! But we don't know when we can enjoy such results of virtuous works (from previous lives) ourselves! Whenever we fall asleep in the caves of Vṛndāvana some mad blackish elephant (Kṛṣṇa) forcibly wakes us up (to make love with us. We are much more attractive to Him than you)!" Tulasī's heart is filled with similar pride over the superiority of Rādhā's own party over the party of Her enemies. Suddenly the vision vanishes and Tulasī prays as follows:

madhu gandhe madhukare, utkṛṣṭa madhura tare,
phule phule uḍiyā beḍāy
toiche rāi aṅga gandha, kabhu yadi śrī govinda,
anukūla pavanete pāy

candrāvalī kara kṛta, mallī puṣpa viracita,
śayya chāḍi nāgarendra rāy.
unmāda hoiyā chuṭe, sei rādhākuṇḍa taṭe,
padma gandhi rādhikā yathāi.

"Just as a bee flies from flower to flower, attracted to their excellent sweet smell, similarly Śrī Govinda, the king of lovers, madly leaves the bed of jasmine-flowers that was handmade by Candrāvalī, to go to the bank of Rādhākuṇḍa whenever a favorable wind carries Rādhikā's lotuslike bodily fragrance to Him."

sumadhura mukha padma, vikasita yeno sadma,
mugdha heri śrī madhusūdana.
śrī aṅga mādhurya sīmā, parimala madhurimā,
madhumaya koilo vṛndāvana.

"Śrī Madhusūdana (the *rasika bee* Kṛṣṇa) will be enchanted by Her (Rādhikā's) face, which is as sweet as a blooming lotus flower, and by Her beautiful body, which is the limit of sweetness and whose fragrance fills the whole of Vṛndāvana with honey-like sweetness."

tuyā caraṇāravinde, amṛta madhura gandhe,
mātibe ki mora nāsā randhra,
gauravete guṇagāna, koriyā juḍābo prāṇa,
he īśvari bhānukula candra !

(Śrī Haripada Śila)

"When will the nectar-sweet fragrance of Your lotus feet madden my nostrils? O Īśvari! O Moon of king Vṛṣabhānu's family! Let me soothe my heart by singing Your glories!"

.

VERSE 75:

SAMANTĀD UNMATTA BHRAMARA-KULA JHAṄKĀRA NIKARAIR

LASAT PADMA STOMAIR API VIHAGA RĀVAIR API PARAM
SAKHĪVṚNDAIḤ SVĪYAIḤ SARASI MADHURE PRĀṆAPATINĀ
KADĀ DRAKṢYĀMAS TE ŚAŚIMUKHI NAVAṀ KELI NIVAHAM

samantād - all around; *unmatta* - intoxicated; *bhramara* - bees; *kula* - host; *jhaṅkāra* - buzzing; *nikaraiḥ* - with an abundance; *lasat* - beautiful; *padma* - lotus; *stomaiḥ* - with many; *api* - even; *vihaga* - birds; *rāvaiḥ* - with chirping; *api* - even; *param* - greatly; *sakhī* - girlfriends; *svīyaiḥ* - with your own; *vṛndaiḥ* - with groups; *sarasi* - in the lake; *madhure* - in the sweet; *prāṇa-patinā* - with the Lord of Your heart; *kadā* - when; *drakṣyāmā* - we will see; *te* - Your; *śaśimukhi* - moonfaced girl; *navaṁ* - new; *keli* - play; *nivaham* - multitude.

O Śaśimukhi (moonfaced girl)! When will we witness Your ever-fresh water sports with the Lord of Your heart and Your friends all together in Your own sweet lake, which is filled with many lotus flowers and surrounded by singing birds and humming bees?

Explanations: In this verse Śrī Raghunātha desires to see the watersports in Rādhākuṇḍa, saying: "O moon-faced Rādhe! When can I see Your sweet watersports with the Lord of Your life in Śrī Rādhākuṇḍa? There are lotus flowers blooming in this sweet lake that attract intoxicated buzzing bees. On the surface of the *kuṇḍa* different birds are singing and chirping. I desire to see Your sweet water sports in that *kuṇḍa*!" Śrī Raghunātha is an ever-liberated associate of the Lord named Rati or Tulasī Mañjarī, descending along with Śrīman Mahāprabhu for the benefit of the world to take everybody along into the *kuñja* as a *kiṅkarī*. Gaurahari means 'golden thief'. Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī said: "Just as a thief disguises himself to steal things Kṛṣṇa stole the appearance of Rādhā, covering Himself with Her luster, afraid of being caught, but when He plundered the storehouse of *rasa* in His descension as Gaura He was naturally caught!"

apāraṁ kasyāpi praṇayi jana-vṛndasya kutukī
rasa stomaṁ hṛtvā madhuram upabhoktuṁ kam api yaḥ
ruciṁ svam āvavre dyutim iha tadīyāṁ prakaṭayan
sa devaś caitanyākṛtir atitarāṁ naḥ kṛpayatu

(Dvitīya Caitanyāṣṭakam, 3)

"Being curious to relish all the limitless *rasa* of love of one of His beloveds (in Vraja, Śrī Rādhā) Kṛṣṇa stole Her lustre and covered His own (blackish) splendor with it, revealing this new golden lustre to everyone. Let this Lord Caitanya show us His great mercy!" Just as Kṛṣṇa stole butter in His childhood, the *gopīs* clothes in His early youth, the *gopīs* hearts in His full youth and finally Śrī Rādhikā's heart, He went on by stealing Her lustre and Her mood to become Gaura and to plunder the storehouse of *rasa* and *prema*. I desire the mercy of that thief! He personally blessed Sītānātha (Advaita Prabhu), saying:

vṛndāraṇyāntarasthaḥ sarasa vilasitenātmanām ātmānam uccair
ānanda syanda vandīkṛta manasam urīkṛtya nitya pramodaḥ
vṛndāraṇyaika niṣṭhān svaruci sama tanūn kārayiṣyāmi yusmān
ityevās te'vaśiṣṭam kim api mama mahat karma tac cātaniṣye

dāsye kecana kecana praṇayinaḥ sakhye ta evobhaye
rādhā-mādhava niṣṭhayā katipaye śrī dvārakādhīśituh
sakhyādāv ubhayatra kecana pare ye vāvatārāntare
mayyābaddha hṛdo'khilān vitanavai vṛndāvanāsaṅginaḥ

(Śrī Caitanya Candrodaya Act X)

"O *ācārya*! I'm always absorbed in My blissful luscious pastimes in Vṛndāvana and I will give you all (spiritual) bodies suitable for joining Me in these Vṛndāvana-pastimes. That one remaining great duty I will swiftly perform! Some devotees are in a mood of servitude, some are fixed in a fraternal mood, some are fixed in the love of Rādhā and Mādhava, others in the Lord of Dvārakā and again others in My different descensions such as Rāma and Nṛsimha. I will lock you all in the chains of My love and give You attachment to Vṛndāvana!" With this 'attachment to Vṛndāvana' the luscious devotional service called *mañjarī-bhāva* is being indicated.[180] Hearing Mahāprabhu's blessing Śrī Sītānātha replied:

nijecchayā prāpaya yad yad eva sthalāntaraṁ no vapur antaraṁ vā
tavaitad āścarya caritram eva jātismarā eva ciraṁ smarāmaḥ

"By Your wish we may attain whatever You want, in any other abode or body. We will eternally remember our origin in Your wonderful pastimes!" From this verse it is understood that the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas simultaneously remember the pastimes of Śrī-Śrī Gaura-Govinda. This was all described by the one who sucked the toe of Mahāprabhu - the great poet Kavi Karṇapūra. Śrīla Ṭhākura Mahāsaya has said: *hethā gauracandra pābo sethā rādhā-Kṛṣṇa*. "Here I will get Gauracandra, and there Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa." Śrī Raghunātha, who is an associate of Gaura, is eternally weeping on the bank of Rādhākuṇḍa - fortunate souls can hear that even now! Then again he is always absorbed in the *rasa* of devotional service to the Yugala Kiśora.

In his spiritual absorption Śrī Raghunātha sees the Yugala Kiśora playing in the water of Rādhākuṇḍa with Kundalatā as the referee. Nāndīmukhī and Dhaniṣṭhā are also there. "What shall We play?" "Water-sports!" The *mañjarīs* change the participants' clothes, dressing Śrī Rādhikā and Her girlfriends in thin white *sārīs* and Śyāmasundara in a thin bathing-dress. Kundalatā sets the stake: The winner can drink the nectar of the loser's lips. The other *sakhīs* are witnesses. Rādhā and Mādhava face Each other and splash Each other with water so that Their thin clothes begin to stick to Their limbs and They can relish the sweet sight of Each other's wet bodies. The *kiṅkarīs* like Rūpa Mañjarī and Tulasī Mañjarī are standing on the shore of Rādhākuṇḍa and also relish this sweet sight. What can Svāminī do against a wrestler? Śyāma splashes so violently that She turns Her back on Him out of fear. Everyone is silent, no one glorifies Śyāma's victory. If Rādhikā had won the shore of Rādhākuṇḍa would have resounded with shouts of 'Rādhe Jaya! Rādhe Jaya!' Śyāma says: "Pay Me My prize, otherwise I will not leave You! Would You have left Me alone if I had lost?" The *sakhīs* don't say 'yes' and they don't say 'no'. Śyāmasundara comes up to Svāminī and holds Her around the neck, saying: 'Give Me My prize!'. How wonderful is Svāminī's beauty at that time! Her half closed eyes are slightly reddish from fighting in the water and She slightly moves Her eyebrows. This gesture is called *helā*, a sign of disrespect towards the lover, born of amorous feelings (*śṛṅgāra bhāva-yukta*). The heroic victor refuses to leave Her. Svāminī's face shows a smile and a cry, and the sweetness of Her laughter shines through Her weeping. She does not close Her eyes altogether. How can She stay there without catching at least a glimpse of such a beautiful Śyāma? Śyāma insists: "Give Me My prize! Give Me My prize!" Svāminī does not want to give the prize so easily. She is full of opposition, hesitance, disrespect and disregard, showing

[180] Thus far the explanation is by Śrī Ānanda Gopāla Gosvāmī.

hundreds of different moods on Her face. The *sakhīs* are standing all around and the transcendental youthful Cupid is saying: "Give it! Give it!" Her mouth says: "Don't touch Me!", but Her heart says: "Won't You touch Me?" How wonderful is Her sweetness as She turns Her face away from Śyāma and shows Him Her glistening cheek. Śyāma becomes enchanted by the beauty of Rādhikā's cheek and sees His own reflection in it. Saying: "The reflection found its place there, won't the original get a place?", Śyāma kisses Her cheek. "Oh, what did You do?" Svāminī sweetly says with Her glances. Śyāma is enchanted by the sweetness of Rādhikā's eyes and kisses them, saying 'what reward shall I give?' and making Her blackish eyeliner stick on His reddish lips. Svāminī says: "Your lips have now become more beautiful!" and turns Her face the other way. When Kṛṣṇa sees Rādhikā's wonderful smile on Her glistening golden right cheek, He kisses that cheek also and thus makes a black mark of eyeliner on that side. When Tulasī sees that she remembers that the golden moon is also marked with blackish spots and therefore she calls Rādhā 'Śaśimukhī', or moonfaced girl, in the text.[181] In this way there are so many hundreds of new sweet water sports. After this Śrī Rādhikā teams up with all of Her girlfriends and they start to splash Nāgara-maṇi with combined forces, making Kṛṣṇa finally lower His moon-like face and say: "No more! No more! I accept defeat!" When Rādhikā hears these nectarean words, She stops splashing Him and smiles in a sweet enchanting and astonishing way. Now the *sakhīs* pick freshly blooming unwhithered lotus flowers and place them in Śrī Rādhā's hands. Śrī Rādhikā lifts Her arm and shows Kṛṣṇa Her beautiful armpit while She aims at His chest and throws the lotus flowers. Śyāma is enchanted by Her beauty, catches all the lotus flowers that innocent Rādhikā ecstatically throws at Him and throws them back at Her. These lotus flowers increase tremendously in beauty by being thrown about by Śrī-Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa's lotuslike hands! Blackbees fly around these fragrant lotus flowers in an intoxicated state, humming like the arrows of Cupid, that resemble Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa's lusty mutual glances, and birds are sweetly singing while Tulasī gazes at Śrī Rādhikā's watersports with the Lord of Her Heart and Her girlfriends in Her beautiful pond! When the vision disappears Śrī Raghunātha weeps and prays:

rādhākuṇḍa rādhā sama, mahimā-moy manorama,
tīre nīre līlā niketana
amṛta samāna jala, śobhā kore padma-dala,
keli kore rāja-haṁsa gaṇa

"Śrī Rādhākuṇḍa is as glorious and enchanting as Śrī Rādhā Herself. Its bank and water are the realms of Her pastimes and its nectarean water, where regal swans play in, is beautified by lotuspetals."

cāri dike cāri ghāṭa, maṇi māṇikyera ṭhāṭa,
ratne bandha sarovara tīra.
prati ghāṭe maṇimoy, koto ye maṇḍapāloy,
parāgete suvāsita nīra.

"On all four sides of its banks are jewel-studded bathingplaces, and on each *ghāṭa* are platforms that are cleaned with water that is nicely scented with flowerpollen."

maṇḍapera pārśve śobhā, kalpataru kalpalatā,
agaṇita keli kuñjavana.
kuñje kuñje manohara, āche koto cabutara,
ratna vedī apūrva darśana.

[181] Narration by Śrī Ānanda Gopāla Gosvāmī.

"These platforms are flanked by desiretrees and desirevines and innumerable playgroves and playforests, and there are enchanting platforms and amazing jewelled seats to be seen in each *kuñja*."

kusumita kuñjavane, madhukara guñjane,
mukharita vana upavana.
vihaṅgama kore gāna, rasa kori mūrtimān,
manda bohe malaya pavana.

"The flowerful forests, groves and subforests of Rādhākuṇḍa are filled with the sweet humming of bees, the songs of the birds are creating a romantic atmosphere (embodying *rasa*), and the southern breeze blows softly."

sei rādhākuṇḍa nīre, heri tava jala vihāre,
sakhī saha prāṇanātha saṅge,
vividha jala vihāra, heri ati suvistāra,
pulake pūribe mora aṅge

(Śrī Haripada Śila)

"My body will be studded with goosepimples of ecstasy when I can witness Your many extensive pastimes in the water of this Rādhākuṇḍa with Your girlfriends and the Lord of Your life!"

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VERSE 76:

SAROVARA LASAT TAṬE MADHUPA GUÑJI KUÑJĀNTARE
SPHUṬAT KUSUMA SAṄKULE VIVIDHA PUṢPA SAṄGHAIR MUDĀ
ARIṢṬAJAYINĀ KADĀ TAVA VARORU BHŪṢĀVIDHIR
VIDHĀSYATA IHA PRIYAṀ MAMA SUKHĀBDHIṀ ĀTANVATĀ

sarovara - lake; *lasat* - beautiful; *taṭe* - on the bank; *madhupa* - bee; *guñji* - humming; *kuñja* - grove; *antare* - inside; *sphuṭat* - blooming; *kusuma* - flower; *saṅkule* - multitude; *vividha* - various kinds; *puṣpa* - flowers; *saṅghaiḥ* - with a multitude; *mudā* - blissfully; *ariṣṭa-jayinā* - by the victor over Ariṣṭa; *kadā* - when; *tava* - Your; *vara uru* - excellent thighs; *bhūṣā* - ornaments; *vidhiḥ* - by means of; *vidhāsyata* - will be done; *iha* - here; *priyaṁ* - beloved; *mama* - my; *sukha* - bliss; *abdhim* - ocean; *ātanvata* - expanding.

O Varoru (nicely thighed girl)! When will the ocean of my bliss expand when I see You being decorated with flowers by joyful Kṛṣṇa, the victor over Ariṣṭāsura, in a grove with many blooming flowers and humming bees on the beautiful bank of Your lake?

Explanations: In the previous verse Śrī Raghunātha perceived the watersports of the Divine Couple. After playing in the water of Rādhākuṇḍa, Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa and Their girlfriends come back on the shore and the *mañjarīs* anoint Them with oil, massage Them, bathe Them again, arrange Their hair and change Their clothes. In this verse Śyāmasundara will singlehandedly decorate Śrī Rādhā in a *kuñja* on the bank of Śrī Rādhākuṇḍa. How incomparibly beautiful is the bank of Śrī Rādhākuṇḍa! There is a sweet *kuñja* there flanked by enchanting trees and vines, bearing so many different kinds of blooming flowers that are surrounded by swarms of thirsty humming bees. In this *kuñja* Ariṣṭajayī Kṛṣṇa will dress Svāminī. "O Nicely thighed girl! Ariṣṭajayī will expand the ocean of my bliss by decorating You with flowers!" Rādhā's maidservants don't like all kinds of bliss. Śrī Kṛṣṇa dāsa Kavirāja defined the nature of the happiness of the *gopikās* as follows:

gopīgaṇa kore yabe Kṛṣṇa daraśana; sukha vāñchā nāhi sukha hoy koṭi guṇa
gopikā darśane kṛṣṇera ye ānanda hoy; tāhā hoite koṭi guṇa gopī āsvādoy
tā sabhāra nāhi nija sukha anurodha; tathāpi bāḍhaye sukha poḍilo virodha
e virodhera ei eka dekhi samādhāna; gopikāra sukha Kṛṣṇa sukhe paryavasāna
.....
āmāra darśane Kṛṣṇa pāilo eto sukha; ei sukhe gopīra praphulla aṅga mukha

"When the *gopīs* go to see Kṛṣṇa they don't desire happiness, and this increases their happiness millions of times. They feel a million times more happiness than Kṛṣṇa feels when He sees them. They are not looking for their own happiness, and that exactly increases their happiness. There's only one explanation for this paradox: The joy of the *gopīs* lies in Kṛṣṇa's happiness. The *gopīs* think: "Kṛṣṇa obtained so much pleasure by seeing me!" This thought makes their bodies and faces blossom." (C.C. Ādi 4) When Kṛṣṇa is happy then Rādhārāṇī is happy, and when both Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa are happy the *sakhīs* are happy, but when Rādhārāṇī comes out as the best, then the *kiṅkarīs* are happy! When *rasamaya* Śyāma expertly serves Svāminī by decorating Her the ocean of their bliss expands! Accompanied by Their maidservants Svāminī and Śyāma enter into a sweet dressing-*kuñja* which is full of blooming flowers that are surrounded by humming bees. Svāminī, staring at Śyāma's face, asks: "Who will dress Me today?" Śyāma says: "Today I will do it, just order Me!" Svāminī gives Her consent with a frown of Her eyebrows: "Allright, You do it." In this way She gives Herself away. What an incomparable service to Her beloved! Considering *bhāva* and *rasa*: *bhāva* is the worshiper and *rasa* is the worshiped. Śrī Rādhā is the empress of full *bhāva* and Kṛṣṇa is the emperor of full *rasa*. Because Śrī Rādhā is the supreme worshiper, *ārādhikā*, She is known in the Purāṇas and other scriptures as 'Rādhikā'. No one knows how to worship like Her. Śyāma single-handedly decorates Svāminī in a *kuñja* on the bank of Śyāmakunda, that is filled with buzzing bees. He seats His beloved on a jewelled throne and sits Himself on Her pedestal in order to be able to decorate Her with hand-made floral ornaments. The *kiṅkarīs* pick different kinds of flowers and bring them to Kṛṣṇa, who measures the size of His planned ornaments with His hands and imbues them with *rasa* through His *rasika* touch. Svāminī sits down on Her jewelled seat and lets Her feet oscillate next to the pedestal, while Ariṣṭajayi personally manufactures the floral earrings and places them on Svāminī's limbs.[182] Why does Tulasī remember Kṛṣṇa's victory over the Ariṣṭa-demon in this text? It was after Kṛṣṇa killed the Ariṣṭa-demon during His manifest pastimes[183] that Rādhākuṇḍa became manifest, in order to preach the confidential glories of Priyājī. There is no place in the Vraja-maṇḍala like Rādhākuṇḍa where Kṛṣṇa enjoys so freely and confidentially with His Priyājī. This is why Tulasī remembers Kṛṣṇa here as Ariṣṭa-jayī. Although Kṛṣṇa is such a great hero to defeat a

[182] Narrated by Śrī Ānanda Gopāla Gosvāmī.

[183] See Śrīmad Bhāgavata, Canto 10, Chapter 36 and its commentary by Viśvanātha Cakravartī.

strong and wild demon like Ariṣṭa He cannot protect Himself against Śrī Rādhikā's delectable beauty. Rasarāja Śrī Kṛṣṇa is greedy for *rasa*, therefore He serves Mahābhāva. Tulasī just stands there, watching Nāgara's expert service and floating in an ocean of *rasa*. With a blink of Her eyes Svāminī tells Tulasī: "Tulasi! Aren't you doing anything?" Tulasī replies with her meaningful glances: "You found a good decorator now, do we still have to serve You? Let us just float in oceans of bliss seeing You being served like that!" Śyāma now stands up on Rādhikā's pedestal, and stands in between Her thighs. Svāminī experiences His touch. Śyāma made seven thin garlands and now He wants to tie them behind Svāminī's neck, but the strings break. Seeing this, Śyāma restrings them and keeps His face next to Svāminī's face, looking over Her left shoulder to see whether He tied the strings properly or not. Normally the moon and the lotus can not be seen together, but now the blue lotus (Kṛṣṇa's face) is seen next to the moon (Rādhikā's face). There's no bounds to the bliss! *kuvalaya cāṅda milalo eka ṭhāma*. When Tulasī sees this she feels the ocean of her spiritual bliss expanding.

Tulasī calls Svāminī Varoru, or nicely thighed girl.[184] Śyāmasundara stands between Rādhikā's thighs to hang a garland on Her breasts. Svāminī is a little scared, so She tries to press Her thighs together and in this way She breaks another string of the flower garland. Śyāma stays between Varoru's thighs, restrings the garland and hangs it on Her again. Tulasī carefully watches, so that she can learn this service from Śyāma and she can remind Svāminī of this pastime when She is separated from Kṛṣṇa again and thus immerse Her in an ocean of bliss. She smiles slightly and calls Her: "Varoru!" Hearing this, Svāminī both chastises and praises Tulasī with Her glances. It is a consent combined with a rebuke. Here Lalitā, Viśākhā and the other *sakhīs* are not present, only Rūpa, Tulasī and the other *mañjarīs* are there. There is no obstacle here to *śṛṅgāra rasa* (Kṛṣṇa, the personification of the erotic spiritual flavour) performing His *śṛṅgāra* (service of decorating Śrī Rādhikā). He is overwhelmed by bliss when He touches Varoru's excellent thighs. Tulasī feels Nāgara's bliss in her own heart. Blessed is the service of Śrī Rādhā! What more can be attained for the intermediary energy of the Lord, the individual souls, in the spiritual world? This is the great gift of Mahāprabhu. Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī is the object of Śrīman Mahāprabhu's limitless mercy.[185] The Lord's heart melted when He saw how fixed Raghunātha was in *bhajan, prema* and renunciation. Indeed, the Lord got in Raghunātha dāsa the embodiment of renounced Vraja-devotion! He was so pleased with Raghunātha that He gave Himself away to him in the form of the Govardhana-*śilā* and the *guñjā-mālā*. After all, the Lord's blessed descension served the purpose of distributing *bhakti-yoga* that is deep with dispassion and realization:

vairāgya vidyā nija bhakti yoga śikṣārtham ekaḥ puruṣaḥ purāṇaḥ
śrī Kṛṣṇa caitanya śarīra-dhārī kṛpāmbudhir yas tam ahaṁ prapadye

(Caitanya Candrodaya Nāṭaka Act Vī)

Tulasī's bliss knows no bounds when she sees how expertly Nāgara dresses Svāminī. That ocean of her spiritual bliss ever increases.....
Śrī Haripada Śila sings:

divya jyoti puñja dhāma, rādhākuṇḍa taṭa sthāna,
nirantara jhalamala kore,
kuṇḍataṭe avasthita, madhukara mukharita,
kusumita nikuñja kuṭīre

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184 *varau śrī kṛṣṇa manoharana sāmarthyāt śreṣṭhau uru yasyāḥ* (Baṅgabihārī Vidyālaṅkāra) "She has the greatest thighs because they are able to steal Śrī Kṛṣṇa's heart."

185 Until here the purport is by Śrī Ānanda Gopāla Gosvāmī.

"The bank of Rādhākuṇḍa is a divine, ever-effulgent abode where the bees hum around the flowerful cottages of the *kuñjas*."

ratana pālaṅka'pari, tomāke bosāye gauri,
ariṣṭa vijayī giridhāre.
sājābe tomāke dhani, nāgarendra cuḍāmaṇi,
vicitra kusuma alaṅkāre.

"O fortunate Gauri (golden beauty)! Giridhārī, the crownjewel of lovers, who was victorious over the Ariṣṭa-demon, seats You there on a jewelled bedstead and decorates You there with wonderful floral ornaments."

he varoru kamalini, paścāte thākiyā āmi,
cāmara ḍhulābo dhīre dhīre.
sukhābdhi taraṅga yoto, uthalibe śata śata,
se vilāsa darśana kore

"O nicely thighed lotus-like girl! I will stand behind You and softly fan You with a whisk. Hundreds of waves will arise in the ocean of my bliss as I witness that pastime!"

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VERSE 77:

SPHĪTASVĀNTAṀ KAYĀCIT SARABHASAM ACIREṆĀRPYAMĀṆAIR DARODYAN NĀNĀ PUṢPORU GUÑJĀ-PHALA NIKARA LASAT KEKI-PIÑCHA PRAPAÑCAIḤ SOTKAMPAṀ RACYAMĀNAḤ KṚTARUCI HARIṆOTPHULLAMAṄGAṀ VAHANTYĀḤ SVĀMINYĀḤ KEŚAPĀŚAḤ KIM U MAMA NAYANĀNANDAM UCCAIR VIDHĀTĀ

sphīta - expanded; *svāntaṁ* - mind; *kayācit* - by some (fem.); *sarabhasam* - joyfully; *acireṇa* - swiftly; *arpyamāṇaiḥ* - being offered; *dara* - slightly; *udyat* - blooming; *nānā* - various; *puṣpa* - flowers; *uru* - great; *guñjā phala* - *guñjā*-beads; *nikara* - amount; *lasat* - beautiful; *keki* - peacock; *piñcha* - feather; *prapañcaiḥ* - with multitudes; *sa* - with; *utkampaṁ* - shivering; *racyamānaḥ* - created; *kṛta* - done; *ruci* - nicely; *hariṇā* - by Hari; *utphullam* - with goosepimples; *aṅgaṁ* - body; *vahantyāḥ* - carrying; *svāminyāḥ* - of my mistress; *keśa* - hair; *pāśaḥ* - braid; *kim u* - whether; *mama* - my; *nayana* - eyes; *ānandam* - bliss; *uccaiḥ* - greatly; *vidhātā* - created.

Will the joy of my eyes increase when I see one maiden swiftly and happily bringing various blooming flowers, big guñjā-beads and peacockfeathers? While Hari makes the braid of my Svāminī with this He shivers and Her whole body blooms up with goosepimples!

Explanations: In a transcendental vision Śrī Raghunātha perceives how sweetly Nāgara is dressing Svāminī, and when he loses this vision he prays. Now he sees how Svāminī's hair is being done. "When will Your braided hair give my eyes great ecstasy? This braid is being beautified by Hari with various flowers, *guñjā*-beads, peacockfeathers and other items. Your body will be studded with goosepimples. How delighted my eyes will be when Your hair becomes so beautiful!" It is unusual to make a girl's braid with peacock feathers. Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa have made love before Tulasī spoke this verse. Now Rādhikā wears a yellow cloth and Kṛṣṇa a blue one. They have exchanged dresses, unable to distinguish between Each other anymore, as a result of reaching a climax of loving ecstasy. Svāminī now has the peacock feather-crown on and Kṛṣṇa has braided hair and a jewel in His part. The cause of this confusion is Their absorption in Their erotic pastimes.[186] In the *rasa-śāstra*, the scriptures that deal with spiritual flavours, this is called *prema vilāsa vivarta* and has two characteristics: contrariety and confusion. Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī writes in his Gopāla Campūḥ (Pūrva 33.13): *rādhā'jānād asaṅge danuja-vijayinaḥ saṅgam ārād asaṅgaṁ saṅgaṁ saṅge caivaṁ samantād gṛha samaya sukha svapna śītādikāni. etasyāḥ vṛttir eṣājani sapadi yadānyad vicitraṁ tadāsīt kāntā kānta svabhāvo'py ahaha yad anayor vaiparītyaya jajñe* "When Śrī Rādhā is with Śrī Kṛṣṇa, She is also separated from Him and when She is separated from Him, She is also together with Him. In the same way She experiences all conditions to be contrary: at home She feels like being in the forest, in the forest She feels like being at home, She feels a moment lasts like a millennium and a millennium lasts like a moment, She feels happy in sorrow and sad in happiness, She feels awake when She's sleeping and She feels like She's sleeping when She is awake, She feels cold when it is hot and She feels hot when it is cold. Not only that, but the most wonderful thing is that She also feels like She is Kṛṣṇa and Kṛṣṇa feels like He is Her!" This means that They exchange nature and thus They may be found wearing Each other's dresses and ornaments. *mādana rasa* is the assemblage of the entire variety of transcendental amorous ecstasies, and they are all eternally present in Śrī Rādhā.

sarva bhāvodgamollāsī mādano'yam parātparaḥ
rājate hlādinī sāro rādhāyām eva yaḥ sadā

(Ujjvala Nīlamaṇi Sthāyi 219)

Śrī Hari is the cause of this exchange of clothes in the *līlā*. He managed to steal the mind of Mādanākhya Mahābhāvavatī Śrī Rādhā. Svāminī does not hesitate when Śyāmasundara acts in such an enchanting way. Śyāmasundara is completely sold to Svāminī's lotus feet. Svāminī feels that She possesses Him, in the mood of *madīyatā* (He is Mine!) and even Śyāmasundara cannot end that feeling. Falling at Her feet He begs Her: "Give Me one festival-like embrace!"[187] How eager Rādhā's Prāṇa-bandhu is falling at Her feet, as if He's missing something! Svāminī stretches out Her hand, lifts Him up and holds Him to Her chest, saying: "Is there anything that I cannot give You?"[188] Kṛṣṇa is expert in stealing Rādhikā's heart - therefore He is known as 'Hari'. This love is mutual, otherwise it is not beautiful. Śrīpāda Prabodhānanda Sarasvatī has written:

parasparaṁ prema-rase nimagnam aśeṣa sammohana rūpa keli
vṛndāvanāntar nava kuñja gehe tan nīla pītaṁ mithunaṁ cakāsti

(Rādhā Rasa Sudhānidhi 197)

[186] Narrated by Śrī Ānanda Gopāla Gosvāmī.

[187] See verse 10 of Śrī Rādhā Rasa Sudhānidhi.

[188] Narrated by Śrī Ānanda Gopāla Gosvāmī.

"There is an enchanting blue and yellow Pair immersed in the flavour of Each other's love, showing innumerable enchanting forms and pastimes in a bowerhouse in Vṛndāvana".

Svāminī is not satisfied in Their pastimes and thinks: "Śyāma does not smile enough; His smile is not fully blooming!", so She causes a smile to blossom on His face by kissing Him again and again. Now She can relish the nectar of His mouth, that makes His flute-song so sweet and that reveals such wonderful jokes. Svāminī's desires cannot be satisfied anymore; Hari has taken away all Her hesitation. The *ācāryas* say that a higher level of *prema* is *praṇaya*. In this stage the loving Couple is no longer aware that They are separate beings. The very life-force of this *praṇaya* is *viśrambha*. Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī writes: *viśrambhaḥ priya-janena saha svasyābheda mananam* "Viśrambha means that the lover feels him/herself to be nondifferent from the beloved." Śrī Viśvanātha Cakravartī explains this further: *viśrambho viśvāsaḥ sambhrama rāhityaṁ tacca sva prāṇa mano buddhi deha paricchadādibhiḥ kānta prāṇa mano buddhyāder aikya bhāvana janyam*. "Viśrambha means faith or freedom from awe and reverence, so that one considers the life, mind, intelligence and dress of the beloved to be one with one's own." It is the stage of intimacy in which one feels no hesitation when the hand of the beloved goes over one's body. It is the same feeling of trust and intimacy as if one would move one's own hand over one's body. In the same way Praṇayinī Rādhā considers each of Śyāma's limbs that She touches to be Her own. This Hari is the cause of all this!

Svāminī's curly braid resembles a big dark cloud and Hari sits behind Her, slowly arranging that hair. Each hair is dearer to Him than millions of lives! He pours His whole life-airs into them! There is no limit to His ecstasy when He obtains the service of His beloved and His shivering hands are studded with goosepimples while He braids Her hair. Svāminī's body is also studded with goosepimples when Hari touches Her. Śyāma looks at Priyājī's face from behind, over Her shoulders, afraid that She may feel pain, but Svāminī consoles Him with a blossoming smile, saying: "Why are You so worried? It didn't hurt!" When Nāgara-rāja hears that He smiles. After Kṛṣṇa has made Rādhikā's braid, one *sakhī* comes with peacock feathers, slightly blooming flowers and *guñjā*-beads (shining red beads with black spots on them) which Śyāma uses to make Svāminī's crown.[189] Also in Śrīmad Bhāgavata (10.30.34) there is a description of this *prema vilāsa vivarta*. Śrī Śuka Muni said: *tāni cūḍayatā kāntām*: "Kṛṣṇa made a crown (like for Himself) for His beloved (Śrī Rādhikā)". Seeing Kṛṣṇa's expertise in decorating Rādhikā, Tulasī is beside herself of ecstasy. It is as if ecstasy Himself appears before her eyes instead of in her mind. It is as if this ecstasy is not enjoyed within the mind, but within the eyes. The practising devotee who is fixed in *smaraṇa* must dive into this *rasa* also. The yearning for Rādhārāṇī's devotional service does not arise within an ordinary heart. It will arise within the heart of someone who can give up everything in the world and who is not dependent on anything. In the Bhagavad-Gītā Kṛṣṇa tells Arjuna: *bhaktimān me priyo naraḥ*: "A person who is devoted is dear to Me." But to attain Rādhā's service is even harder. Without total absorption it cannot be attained. The *ācāryas* have revealed how one can become dear to Rādhārāṇī. Śrī Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī exclaims: *tavaivāsmi tavaivāsmi na jīvāmi tvayā vinā* "I am Yours! I am Yours! I cannot live without You!" We must experience some of this absorption also. We must expell the influence of *māyā* from the mind. The great words (*mahā vāṇī*) of the *ācāryas* will strengthen the weak devotees and will gradually bring them back on the path. Tulasī is absorbed in bliss when she sees Svāminī's hair being done. Suddenly the vision vanishes and Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa prays:

ardha vikaśita nānā kusuma nikara; nava guñjā-mālā śikhi-puccha manohara
kona sakhī tāhā loye praphulla antare; premānande pulaka vivaśa kalevara
Kṛṣṇa-kare avilambe koribe arpaṇa; sādare loiyā tāhā vrajendra-nandana

[189] Narrated by Śrī Ānanda Gopāla Gosvāmī.

śrī rādhāra keśapāśa koribe bhūṣita; kāntā-sparśa-sukhe koro hoibe kampita
tāhāte utphulla-citta ho'be śrī rādhāra; svāminīra se keśa-racanā camatkāra
koto dine āmi hāya heribo nayāne; kobe vā hoibe netra ānanda magane

(Śrī Rasika-Candra dāsa)

"Some *sakhī* with blossoming heart, and Her body overwhelmed with goosepimples of ecstatic love places half-blooming flowers, fresh *guñjā*-garlands and enchanting peacockfeathers into Kṛṣṇa's hands without delay, and Vrajendra-nandana carefully takes them and ornaments Śrī Rādhā's hair with them. His hands start shivering when He experiences the blissful touch of His beloved and this again causes Śrī Rādhā's heart to blossom. Alas! How many more days will pass before my eyes will be absorbed in ecstasy by seeing Svāminī's hair being braided in this astonishing way?"

.

VERSE 78:

MĀDHAVAṀ MADANA KELI VIBHRAME
MATTAYĀ SARASIJENA BHAVATYĀ
TĀḌITAṀ SUMUKHI VĪKṢYA KIM TV IYAṀ
GŪḌHA HĀSYA VADANĀ BHAVIṢYATI

mādhavaṁ - Mādhava; *madana* - erotic; *keli* - sports; *vibhrame* - made a mistake; *mattayā* - out of excitement or pride; *sarasijena* - with a lotus flower; *bhavatyā* - by You; *tāḍitaṁ* - beaten; *sumukhi* - fairfaced girl; *vīkṣya* - seeing; *kim* - whether; *tu* - but; *iyaṁ* - this; *gūḍha hāsya* - giggling; *vadanā* - face; *bhaviṣyati* - will become.

O Sumukhi (fairfaced girl)! When will I secretly smile when I see You proudly and in excitement beating Mādhava with Your playlotus during Your lovesports?

Explanations: One transcendental pastime after the other appears before the eyes of Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī, who is immersed in an ocean of *rasika* pastimes, giving him great joy. Then again, when these visions vanish he greatly laments and prays. *iyam avasthā khalu bhakta-janasya puruṣārtha-dātrī* (Śrīpāda Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa) "Such a condition surely brings the highest goal of life to the devotee." When the worship of the all-sweet, all-ecstatic, all-loving and all-beautiful Lord becomes established within the heart the living entity obtains the relish of a complete bliss and thus become blessed. This is the great truth preached by the experienced loving devotees. When, by the Lord's grace, the devotee gradually advances, his desires for personal happiness gradually subside and he will consider happiness, distress, good, bad, heaven, hell and liberation as useless as phantasmagorias. The desire for liberation must be counted amongst the different cheating propensities. Gradually the goddess of devotion Bhakti-*devī* will be established within the devotee's heart, which will then be inundated by *bhakti-rasa* as he begins to yearn for *rāgamayī sevā* (devotional service with firm

attachment to the deity). Gradually the practising devotee's identification with his male body will vanish and he will start thinking of himself as a *mañjarī*, qualified for serving Śrī-Śrī Rādhā-Mādhava. Thus the right demeanour will take place in his heart and he will become fixed in Vraja-*bhajan*. The whole scene of the material world will vanish from his eyes and he will start to perceive the eternally luscious, sweet and beautiful kingdom of God. There he will be blessed by floating and sinking in the ocean of all-sweet and all-beautiful Śrī-Śrī Rādhā-Mādhava's forms, qualities and pastimes, who are dearer to him than millions of lives in both meeting and separation. This is the highest fulfillment of the practising devotee. Lord Śrī Gaurasundara, who is the embodiment of blissful pastimes, love and deep taste, has preached this sweet kind of worship to the world and His dearmost associates Śrī Rūpa and Śrī Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī have shown the way to the people of the world by giving them the perfect example. It is most beneficial for a practising devotee to hear and chant the stories of their worship and their love.

Śyāmasundara has finished decorating Svāminī's hair. This is where Śrī Raghunātha's vision (in the previous verse) ended. Now he perceives a new pastime of Śyāmasundara sitting behind Svāminī, trying to make Her hair nicely. How wonderful is His expertise in decorating the hair! The embodiment of erotic transcendental *rasa* engages Himself in the service of *mahā bhāva*. Svāminī is most satisfied with Śyāmasundara's expert arrangements and says: "How beautifully You have done My hair!" She wonders: "How can I properly reward Him?" and then gives Him a sweet kiss. When He is kissed our Hero makes a mistake. He is out of His usual habit and forgets everything. Then the pastimes develop in such a way that Svāminī has to beat Him with Her playlotus like a teacher striking a pupil who has made some mistake.[190] She's certainly a schoolmistress! Who can say in how many ways She can teach? Śrīmatī eagerly comes to Śrī Rādhākuṇḍa to meet Kṛṣṇa (at noontime) and in the village of Kuñjerā (5 km north-west of Rādhākuṇḍa) She meets Her dearmost girlfriend Vṛndā.

kasmād vṛnde priya sakhi hareḥ pādamūlāt kuto'sau
kuṇḍāraṇye kim iha kurute nṛtya śikṣāṁ guru kaḥ
tam tvan mūrtiḥ prati taru latā dik vidikṣu sphurantī
śailusīva bhramati parito nartayantī sva pascāt

(Govinda Līlāmṛta 8,77)

"O Vṛnde, where have you come from?" Vṛndā replied: "From Hari's footsoles". Rādhā: "Where is He?" Vrndā: "In the forest by Your lake!" Rādhā: "What is He doing there?" Vṛndā: "He is learning how to dance." Rādhā: "Who is His teacher?" Vṛndā: "Your very form, which is like a dancing girl whom He sees in each direction. He is simply wandering around, dancing behind You!" Kṛṣṇa had His own experience: *rādhikāra prema -guru; āmi śiṣya naṭa; sadā āmā nānā nṛtye nācāya udbhaṭa* (C.C. Ādi 4, 124) "Śrī Rādhikā's love is the teacher and I am the dancing pupil. Thus She always makes Me dance in different ways."

Kṛṣṇa has made a mistake in His play, for which He gets beaten by Rādhikā's playlotus. Rasamaya Kṛṣṇa cannot even ascertain the value of this *rasika* beating! How much pleasure Her rebukes are giving Him! *priyā yadi māna kori koroye bhārtsana; veda stuti hoite hare sei mora mana* (Caitanya Caritāmṛta Ādi 4, 26) "When My beloved is angry with Me and chastises Me, that takes My mind away from the reverential hymns (to Me) of the Vedas!" In that field who can measure the ecstasy of this *rasika* chastisement in this pastime? Śrī Kṛṣṇa dāsa Kavirāja's honey-sweet statements are fully justified: *Kṛṣṇake korāya śyāma-rasa madhupāna; nirantara pūrṇa kore kṛṣṇera sarva kāma* (C.C.) "She makes Kṛṣṇa drink the honey-beverage named Śyāma-*rasa* (erotic flavours). Thus She always fulfills all of Kṛṣṇa's desires!" No one else than Śrī Rādhā is so expert in making Śrī Govinda, who is Himself the enchanter of millions of

[190] Narrated by Śrī Ānanda Gopāla Gosvāmī.

Cupids, relish the honey named Śyāma-*rasa* or *śṛṅgāra rasa* in so many ways. Śyāmasundara can simply not imagine how *akhaṇḍa rasa vallabhā vārṣabhānavī* (Śrī Rādhā, who is the complete *rasika* lady-love) serves Him by giving Him this indescribable *rasa*! When Tulasī sees Svāminī striking Śyāma with Her *līlā-kamala* (play-lotus) she giggles, covering her mouth with her veil, and her accompanying *mañjarīs* laugh with her. Where our hero has failed and why Svāminī is not satisfied, is indicated by this meaningful giggling and this brings our Hero back to His senses. Tulasī means to say: "When Kṛṣṇa sees me giggling He will understand His own fickleness and where He has failed."[191] How meaningful this giggling is, is indicated by the words *gūḍha hāsya*, secret laughing, in the text. The *kiṅkarīs* are the embodiments of devotional service. They don't display any other activity than service. The practising devotees will become qualified to serve Rasamaya Śyāma and Rasamayī Svāminī by following in their footsteps. *ye sthāne ye līlā kore yugala kiśora; sakhīra saṅgiṇī hoiyā tā'he hao bhora* (Prārthanā) "Be absorbed in the pastimes of the Yugala Kiśora, living in Their abode as a companion of the *sakhīs*." The stream of Śrī Raghunātha's vision flows on without interruption.

he sumukhi vilāsini, vilāsa kuñjete tumi,
keli talpe kandarpa vilāse.
ānanda taraṅge ḍube, keli bhrānta śrī mādhave,
līlā padme tāḍita koribe.

"O fairfaced, playful girl! When You have Your erotic pastimes on Your lovebed in the play-*kuñja,* You strike Śrī Mādhava with Your playlotus when He makes a mistake because He's floating on waves of ecstasy."

latāra āḍāle thāki, gūḍha līlā dekhibo ki,
sakhī saṅge sahāsya vadane.
raghunātha dāsa gosvāmī, bhāgavata cuḍāmani,
nivedoye īśvarī caraṇe.

"Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī, the crownjewel of all devotee-saints, prays to Īśvarī's lotus feet: "When can I giggle with my girlfriends as I witness this fun through the holes in the foliage?" {Śrī Haripada Śila}

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VERSE 79:

SULALITA NIJA BĀHVĀŚLIṢṬA GOṢṬHENDRA SŪNOḤ
SUBALITATARA BĀHVĀŚLEṢA DĪVYAN NATĀṀSA
MADHURA MADANA GĀNAṀ TANVATĪ TENA SĀRDDHAṀ
SUBHAGA-MUKHI MUDAṀ ME HĀ KADĀ DĀSYASI TVAM

sulalita - very graceful; *nija* - own; *bāhu* - arm; *āśliṣṭa* - embraced; *goṣṭhendra* - the king of Vraja; *sūnoḥ* - of the son; *subalitatara* - very strong; *bāhu* - arm; *āśleṣa* - embraced; *dīvyan* - splendid;

[191] Narrated by Śrī Ānanda Gopāla Gosvāmī. Sanskrit commentator Baṅgabihārī Vidyālaṅkāra adds: *he sumukhi kṛṣṇa parābhavajena hāsena śobhanaṁ manoharaṁ mukhaṁ yasyāḥ* "She is named Sumukhi because Her face becomes beautified by an enchanting smile after defeating Kṛṣṇa in the erotic game."

nata - lowered; *aṁsa* - shoulder; *madhura* - sweet; *madana* - erotic; *gāna* - songs; *tanvatī* - extending; *tena sārdhaṁ* - with Him; *subhaga* - beautiful; *mukhi* - face (fem.): *mudaṁ* - joy; *me* - to me; *hā* - O!; *kadā* - when; *dāsyasi* - will give; *tvam* -You.

O Subhaga Mukhi (fairfaced girl)! When will You give me great joy, singing sweet lovesongs with the prince of Vraja, while You embrace Him with Your very graceful arms and He holds His strong arm on Your low shoulders?

Explanations: In his transcendental visions Śrī Raghunātha dāsa constantly experiences the sweetness of the Divine Couple. There are no words to express this experience, but he tries as good as he can. The sweetness of God cannot be explained by writing books, therefore the writers of the scriptures call it *mūkāsvādanavat*: A dumb person can relish sweet mellows, and can feel great ecstasy because of it, but he cannot express it with words. The same goes for God's sweetness. Although the great saints who personally experienced God's sweetness tried to express themselves somehow in their books, one must ultimately practise *bhajan* in order to see it for oneself. It is not possible to get full savour and experience of this simply by reading books, therefore Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī has defined the means to relish *rasa* in his Bhakti Rasāmṛta Sindhuḥ (2.1.6-7):

bhakti nirdhūta doṣānāṁ prasannojjvala cetasām;
śrī bhāgavata raktānāṁ rasikāsaṅga raṅginām
jīvanībhūta govinda pāda bhakti sukhāśriyām;
premāntaraṅga bhūtāni kṛtyānyevānutiṣṭhatām

"Those who are completely washed of all material contamination by their pure devotion, whose hearts are brightened by spiritual satisfaction, who are very attached to hearing the holy topics of Śrīmad Bhāgavata, who enjoy the blissful company of *rasika* saints, whose very life is the blissful wealth of devotion to Govinda's feet, who always discharge the confidential duties of love like *hari nāma saṅkīrtana*, associating with *rasika* saints, hearing transcendental topics from them and remembering these topics throughout the day are qualified to relish *bhagavat-rasa* (the flavour of God)."

Śrī Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī's heart is suffering the pain of love-in-separation. Separation from Śrīman Mahāprabhu, separation from Rūpa and Sanātana Gosvāmī, and within himself he feels a great want of his Svāminījī. His body is burning in the forestfire of separation, and he anxiously prays: "When will You make me happy?" What is the happiness of Rādhikā's maidservants? Not their own satisfaction, but the happiness of the Yugala Kiśora. While Śrī Raghunātha floats on the waves of prayer, that are heightened by the pain of separation, the picture of another transcendental pastime appears to him. Svāminī and Her Nāgara are approaching him, singing sweet songs with Each other on the bank of Śrī Rādhākuṇḍa. Svāminī places Her lovely arm on the shoulder of Goṣṭha Yuvarāja (Kṛṣṇa, the prince of the meadows), embracing Him. Svāminī's arm is elegant because of Her pure love, not just because of Her physical beauty. Hari cannot be subdued with mere physical beauty without love. In Lalita Mādhava (Act V) it is described how Garuḍa was enchanted by Rukmiṇī's beauty prior to Her abduction by Śrī Kṛṣṇa:

saundaryāmbunidher vidhāya mathanaṁ dambhena dugdhāmbudher

gīrbāṇair udahāri cāru caritā yā sāra sampan mayī
sā lakṣmīr api cakṣuṣāṁ cira camatkāra kriyāṁ cāturīṁ
dhatte hanta tathā na kāntibhir iyaṁ rājñaḥ kumārī yathā

"When the *devas* churned the Milk-Ocean they also churned the ocean of beauty and took the beautiful-natured Lakṣmī-devī, the goddess of fortune from there. Aho! This princess is astonishing my eyes with her beauty in such a way that the beauty of Lakṣmī-devī cannot impress me anymore!" But when Kṛṣṇa heard Garuḍa's words He said: *sakhe bhavatu kim etena rūpa mātreṇa na hārya hariḥ* (ibid.) "O friend! Let it be! What's the use of your description? Hari is not just enchanted by physical beauty! Unless that beauty is made out of love it won't be able to enchant Me! Therefore say something about her love for Me!" Svāminījī's arms consists of *mahā-bhāva*, that's why they are so lovely. Svāminī's right arm goes over Śyāma's back up to His right abdomen and Śyāma places His long left arm over Her left shoulder and makes His left hand reach as far as Her left breast. How many hundreds of desires arise in Śyāma's heart after Svāminī touches Him with Her elegant loving arms! Śyāmasundara's arms are strong, unlimitedly strong, and this beauty becomes very beautiful when they are engaged in Svāminī's service. When Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa embrace Each other They begin to sing sweet lovesongs in an intoxicated state. They relish the beauty of the forest on the bank of Śrī Rādhākuṇḍa, where the trees and vines are full of blooming flowers that are surrounded by bees that are thirsty after their honey, where the deer and hares freely play, where the cuckoos, parrots and cranes are sweetly singing and where the air is filled with the rich fragrance of the blooming lotus-, Kahlāra- and Campaka-flowers. Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa Themselves illuminate this shore with Their own golden and bluish effulgence. *mādayatīti madana*: Cupid intoxicates and lovesongs, *madana gāna*, are also intoxicating songs. Svāminī presses Śyāma's right abdomen with Her right lotushand to tap the rhythm. Whatever gap there was between Their bodies disappears now that They firmly embrace Each other. How much Svāminī enjoys![192] She sings: *e buka ciriyā yekhāne parāṇa, sekhāne tomāre thobo* "I will tear open My chest where My heart is, and I will put You there!" Śyāma also taps the rhythm on Svāminī's bosom. Svāminī feels the strength of Śyāma's arm. Rasamaya Śyāma and Rasamayī Svāminī! How sweet are Their voices! Sometimes Svāminī keeps Her head on Śyāma's chest and sings:

śyāma baṅdhu! āmāra parāṇa tumi!
kona śubha dine, dekhā tomā sone,
pāsarite nāri āmi
yokhon dekhiye, o cāṅda vadane,
dhairaya dharite nāri
abhāgīra prāṇa, kore ān cān,
daṇḍe daśa bār mari
more koro doyā, deho pada chāyā,
śunaho parāṇa kānu!
kula śīla sob, bhāsāinu jole,
nā jīyābo tuwā vinu!

"Śyāma! O friend! You are My life! I cannot forget that blessed day that I met You! When I saw Your moonlike face I could not stay calm anymore. The heart of this unfortunate girl aches, I'm dying ten times in half an hour! O Kānu (Kṛṣṇa)! Listen! You are My very life! Be kind to Me, give Me the shade of Your lotus feet! I have made My reputation and My family tradition sink in the water (of love)! I cannot live without You!"

[192] Narrated by Śrī Ānanda Gopāla Gosvāmī.

How beautiful is Svāminī's face when She sings this sweet lovesong! How wonderful are Her gestures! That's why Tulasī calls Her Subhaga-mukhī (fairfaced girl) here! Śyāma also sings an appropriate lovesong:

sundari! āmāre kohicho ki?
tomāra pīriti, bhāvite bhāvite,
vibhora hoiyāchi
thira nahe mon, sadā ucāṭan,
soyātha nāhiko pāy
gagane bhuvane, daśa diga gaṇe,
tomāre dekhi sadāi
tomāra lāgiyā, beḍāi bhramiyā,
giri nodī bone bone
khāite śuite, ān nāhi cite,
sadāi jāgaye mone
śuno vinodini, premera kāhini,
parāṇa roiyāche bāndhā
ekai parāṇa, deha bhina bhina,
jñāna kohe - gelo dhāndā

"O beautiful girl! What are You telling Me? I have become absorbed in remembering Your love again and again! My mind never finds peace, it is always agitated and I can find no consolation! I always see You everywhere, in all ten directions, in the sky as well as on earth! I wander over the hills and the rivers and through the forest, just looking for You! I don't think of anyone else but You! You appear in My mind even when I eat or sleep! Listen, O Vinodini (giver of joy), to this love story! We are two bodies with one soul!" Jñāna dāsa sings: "Gone is the duality (between Them, as They have now united)."

Svāminī is enchanted by Śyāma's song and lifts Her arm from His belly up to His neck. She lowers Her face and rewards Śyāma with a kiss. That is a suitable reward for such a sweet lovesong! There is no limit to Śyāma's ecstasy! They are freely enjoying, as sweetly as the king of elephants with a she-elephant. There are no *sakhīs* around here.

doṅhe kohi doṅha anurāga; duhu prema dui hṛde jāga
doṅhe doṅhā koru parihāra; duhu āliṅgai koto bāra
duhu bimbādhare duhu daṁśa; duhu guṇa duhu paraśaṁsa
duhu heri dohāra vayāna; duhu jana sajala nayāna
duhu koho madhurima bhāṣa; nirakhaye yadunātha dāsa

"They declare Their love to Each other, and mutual love arises in Their hearts. They leave Each other and then They embrace Each other again so many times! They bite Each other's Bimbafruit-like lips and glorify Each other's qualities. They stare at Each other's faces with tear-filled eyes and speak sweet words to Each-other, while Yadunātha dāsa watches."

vana vihāra (forest-sports). Svāminī picks flowers and decorates Śyāma with them, and Śyāma also picks flowers to decorate Svāminī with. Singing and singing They thus proceed to the bank of Rādhākuṇḍa. Tulasī's bliss knows no bounds when she beholds that. When this vision disappears from her she cries, and prays: "Please come this way once more and look at me! I am all alone here! I will be so happy when I can see Your blissful pastimes here again! You left me behind here on the bank of the *kuṇḍa*! I will be fulfilled if I can see You one more time again! O Svāmini! Where shall I go if You reject me? My life is dedicated to Your service! May the effulgence of Your toenails shine in my heart and soothe it, that is my long-cherished desire! The shore of Rādhākuṇḍa is illuminated by Your divine effulgence, as You come here

dancing and singing. How can I like anything else still after seeing You having come here?" The more separation Śrī Raghunātha feels, the more he relishes. The more hunger, the more savour. The Gosvāmīs showed this by their example. Crying and crying, the practising devotee will become overwhelmed and then he will experience all this. These experiences will slacken the bondage of bodily consciousness. The sweetness of the Divine Pair can be fully relished in the consciousness of a maidservant. We will be blessed if we experience these feelings of our great example, Śrīla Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī![193] When this vision vanishes Śrī Raghunātha rolls on the bank of Rādhākuṇḍa and laments:

tava bāhu mṛṇālinī ati sulalita;
vrajendra-nandana tāhe ho'ye āliṅgita
nija subalita bāhu korile arpaṇa;
ānata hoibe tava skandha suśobhana
madhura madana gāna kṛṣṇera sahite;
gāhiyā sumukhi kobe sukha dibe cite

(Śrī Rasika-Candra dāsa)

"Your arms are as lovely as lotusstems and Vrajendra-nandana is being embraced by them. Because He places His own strong arm on Your shoulders they have become beautifully lowered. O Sumukhi! When will You gladden my heart by singing sweet erotic songs with Kṛṣṇa?"

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VERSE 80:

JITVĀ PĀŚAKA KHELĀYĀM ĀCCHIDYA MURALĪṀ HAREḤ
KṢIPTĀṀ MAYI TVAYĀ DEVI GOPAYIṢYĀMI TĀṀ KADĀ

jitvā - having won; *pāśaka* - dice; *khelāyām* - in the game; *ācchidya* - snatching away; *muralīṁ* - the flute; *hareḥ* - from Hari; *kṣiptāṁ* - thrown; *mayi* - to me; *tvayā* - by You; *devi* - O Goddess!; *gopayiṣyāmi* - I will hide; *tāṁ* - that flute; *kadā* - when.

O Devi, when You defeat Hari in a dice game You snatch away His flute. When will You throw it to me, so that I can hide it somewhere?

Explanations: In a vision Śrī Raghunātha relished Śrī-Śrī Rādhā-Mādhava's Vana Vihāra and the sweetness of Their love-songs, and when this vision disappears he feels great pain. He is completely absorbed in Śrī Rādhārāṇī; other than She no-one can soothe the pain of his separation. Śrī Rādhā embodies the quintessence of the *hlādinī-śakti. hlādinī korāya kṛṣṇe āsvādana dāna. hlādinī dvārāya kore bhaktera poṣaṇa.* (C.C.) The *hlādinī*-potency makes the Lord Rasika Śekhara, the king of relishers, and gives Him the relish of *līlā*, and when it enters the devotees' hearts it gives them the bliss of Kṛṣṇa's devotional service. Śrī Rādhikā is the essential

[193] Explanation of *vana vihāra* by Śrī Ānanda Gopāla Gosvāmī.

portion of that *hlādinī*-potency and She delights both the Lord and the devotees in this way. Within the Lord She appears as *hlādinī svarūpinī* and within the devotees She appears as *bhakti-rūpiṇī*. Just as Kṛṣṇa cannot find any other *gopī* but Śrī Rādhā to relieve Him of the suffering of separation from Śrī Rādhā, similarly no one else but She can soothe the devotees' suffering of separation from Her. "How merciful Śrī Gurudeva was to introduce me to the maidservice of such a Rādhārāṇī! How sad that I don't realize this! Instead of the lotus feet of this Rādhā I prefer profit, adoration and distinction in this world! This is surely the result of committing offenses for innumerable births! Although I have received the mercy of the saints and my *guru* I am still deprived of it! How unfortunate I am!" *sādhu mukhe kathāmṛta, śuniyā vimala cita, nāhi bhelo aparādha kāraṇa* (Ṭhākura Mahāśaya) "I could not hear the nectarean words of the saints because of committing offenses!"

Suffering great separation, Śrīla Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī weeps. Then Svāminī mercifully calls him: "Tulasi, come!" Śrī Raghunātha dāsa sits up and sees another transcendental picture: A dice-game has commenced in the grove of Sudevī-*sakhī*. Sukumārī (tender Rādhikā) could not stand up against heroic Kṛṣṇa during the watersports, the honey-drinking play or the swinging pastime, so now the *sakhīs* are finding a means to defeat Nāgara Kṛṣṇa. Fairfaced Kṛṣṇa sits facing fairfaced Rādhikā in Sudevī's green grove, surrounded by all Their dear loving girlfriends. First They put Kṛṣṇa's flute and Rādhikā's Vīṇā at stake, placing these stakes in front of them. Nāndīmukhī and Vṛndā are the witnesses and Kundalatā is the conductor of the moves of the pawns. Lalitā sits on Rādhā's side and Madhumaṅgala on Kṛṣṇa's side as advisors, no one else can interfere by undoing a move already made or vice versa. First They must open the hands before They can throw, and when someone throws 17 or more the hand must also be opened. Svāminī says: "Sundara! You can make the first move!" Śyāmasundara throws, but does not open His hand. Svāminī shakes the dice between Her hands and at the same time She shakes Kṛṣṇa's mind with Her soft smile. At the first throw She immediately scores 17 and She opens Her hand. The *sakhīs* exchange meaningful glances with Each other and say; "We could understand that You would win this game! O You cowherdboy! Just run after Your cows with a stick in Your hand, saying '*hai hai*' to move them up! What do You know about dice?" During the second throw Śyāma opens His hand. Tulasī sits by Svaminī's side in such a way that she can see Her face. Svāminī is bewildered when She sees Śyāmasundara's sweet form and Śyāmasundara becomes engrossed in gazing at Rādhā's sweetness. Will He ever see Her like this again? There are very few people who love Them. There are plenty of people who like to take from God, but there is no one who knows how to give to Him. Everyone is busy taking from Him. "Should I do *bhajan* just for my own pleasure? Or should I forget about my own happiness and distress and do *bhajan* just to please Him with my service? I'm chanting because it makes me happy. While chanting, do I remember He whose bliss knows no bounds when he hears me chanting? I don't mind to introduce myself as a pure devotee, but I'm not aiming at the happiness of my beloved deity. I'm mainly concerned with my own happiness and distress!" In Śrīmad Bhāgavata it is seen that Bali Mahārāja gave everything to the Lord and just remained His gatekeeper.[194] The *gopīs* are the greatest devotees:

ātma sukha-duḥkha gopīra nāhika vicāra;
Kṛṣṇa sukha hetu ceṣṭā mano vyavahāra
Kṛṣṇa lāgi āra sab kori parityāga;
Kṛṣṇa sukha hetu kore śuddha anurāga {C.C.}

"The *gopīs* don't consider their own happiness and distress. Their pure love makes them act just for Kṛṣṇa's pleasure. For Kṛṣṇa they give up everything. Their pure love causes

[194] Narrated by Śrī Ānanda Gopāla Gosvāmī

them just to act for Kṛṣṇa's happiness." And Śrī Rādhārāṇī is again the greatest of them all. *kṛṣṇendriyāhlāda guṇair udārā śrī rādhikā rājati rādhikeva* (Govinda Līlāmṛta) "Because She delights all of Kṛṣṇa's senses with Her beautiful attributes Śrī Rādhikā shines like Śrī Rādhikā alone". She cannot be compared with anyone else indeed. Because they have taken shelter of Śrī Rādhikā's lotus feet, this great love is also infused in the maidservants. They don't know anything else in this world but the happiness of the Divine Couple. Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī prays to Śrī Rūpa Mañjarī in his 'Saṅkalpa prakāśa stotra (11)':

sa dakṣa krīḍāhaṁ vidhim iha tathā śikṣayatu sā
sudevī me divyaṁ sadasi sudṛśāṁ gokula bhuvām
tayor dvandve khelām atha vidadhatoḥ sphūrjati yathā
karomi śrī nāthāṁ sakhi vijayinīṁ netra kathanaiḥ

"O *sakhi* Rūpa Mañjarī! May Sudevī teach me the art of dice-playing when the divine Couple play at dice in the assembly of fair-eyed girls born in Gokula. With the words of my eyes I shall declare my Śrī Nāthā (beautiful mistress) to be the winner!"

Svāminī is completely bewildered when She sees Śyāma's moonlike face and Śyāma makes some noise to distract Her. At that moment Tulasī gives Svāminī a hint with her eyes and Svāminī wins. As soon as Śyāma loses He picks up His flute. Svāminī tries to take the flute away, saying: "Give Me Your flute!", but Śyāma does not want to give it. He is Rasika Śekhara, so He wants to play a little bit. He won't hand over the flute, so Svāminī tries to grab it from Him. They both start pulling at the flute, and Svāminī says: "I've won! Why don't You give Me Your flute? Your flute is very naughty, it spoils everything, I will throw it into the Yamunā!" Śyāma hides His flute behind His head, so Svāminī throws Herself on Śyāma with Her full weight and snatches it away from Him, making Him relish an extraordinary spiritual flavour with Her *vāmya bhāva* (attitude of opposition). "First I give You something that You desire, and then I will take Your flute! I will immerse You in an ocean of bliss by snatching the flute from You!" That's Svāminī's mood. Can you imagine Śyāma Nāgara's condition then!? He loosens His grip on the flute, so Svāminī has the chance to snatch it from His hand and throw it to Tulasī, who quickly hides it somewhere. In this way Svāminī steals the flute by enchanting Śyāma. There must have been some enchanting herb on Her breasts! Thus Svāminī is known as Jaya-Śrī, the beautiful goddess of victory. The *sakhīs* and *mañjarīs* lean against Each other, laughing and laughing. When our Hero comes back to His senses He sees that He lost His flute, so He says: "Where's My flute?" Śrī Rādhikā says: "Who knows? You were defeated, but You didn't hand it in! We don't know where Your flute is!" Śyāma : "Surely You must have taken it!" Svāminī jokingly says: "Why should I? You think we have a shortage of firewood at home? And even if we were short of wood, with this much wood we cannot even heat up some milk! Why then should we take Your small bamboo flute?", and She meaningfully looks at Lalitā, who is then immediately searched by Kṛṣṇa. Lalitā blinks at Viśākhā, so Kṛṣṇa goes up to Viśākhā and feels if she has the flute on her body or not. Thus Kṛṣṇa looks for His flute on all the eight *sakhīs* and all the *mañjarīs,* starting with Śrī Rūpa Mañjarī. Thus Kṛṣṇa looks like a blue swan relishing all the golden lotus flowers (*gopīs*) in the nectar-ocean of Sudevī's grove. There's no limit to their ecstasy![195] Suddenly the vision vanishes and Śrī Raghunātha dāsa prays:

he śrī rādhe kuñja mājhe, rasamayi rasarāje,
pāśā khelā koribe yokhon,
caudike cāṅdera melā, ālo kori vrajabālā,
se līlā koribe daraśana

[195] Narrated by Śrī Ānanda Gopāla Gosvāmī.

"O Śrī Rādhe! Rasamayi! When You play dice with the king of *rasikas* in the *kuñja*, all the *sakhīs*, that shine like a host of moons, surround You. When can I witness that pastime?"

doṅhe ati rasamoy, keho kāro kom noy,
kalāvati kalāguru nāma.
cāturyete pāśā cale, bhaṅgi kori kathā bole,
kaṭākṣete hāne pāñca bāṇa.

"You are both full of nectarean flavours. Neither one of You is inferior, therefore You're named Kalāvati (the artful girl) and Kalāguru (the teacher of all arts). When You cleverly exchange glances, speak and make gestures while You throw the dice, Cupid is defeated."

krīḍā kauśalete dhani, sarva bhāve vijayinī,
parājita dekhi vaṁśīdhare.
rasa raṅge kutūhole, muralī loiyā bole,
se muralī dibe mora kare.

"O Dhani (fortunate girl)! You are so expert at play that You become victorious in all respects. When You see that Vaṁśīdhara (Kṛṣṇa) is defeated, You forcibly snatch His flute away just for some *rasik* fun, and hand it to me."

tomāra iṅgite pāiyā, ati haraṣita hoiyā,
lukāiyā rākhibo muralī.
bahuta sandhāna kori, nā pāibe vaṁśī hari,
sakhīgaṇe dibe karatālī.

(Śrī Haripada Śila)

"On Your indication I blissfully hide the Muralī-flute, and the *sakhīs* clap their hands when they see that Hari cannot get it back, despite an elaborate search!"

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VERSE 81:

AYI SUMUKHI KADĀHAṀ MĀLATĪ KELITALPE
MADHURA MADHURA GOṢṬHĪṀ VIBHRATĪṀ VALLABHENA
MANASIJA SUKHADE'SMIN MANDIRE SMERA GAṆḌĀṀ
SA PULAKA TANUR EṢA TVAṀ KADĀ VĪJAYĀMI

ayi - O!; *sumukhi* - fairfaced girl; *kadā* - when; *aham* - I; *mālatī* - jasmine flower*: keli* - play; *talpe* - on the bed; *madhura madhura* - ever-so-sweet; *goṣṭhīṁ* - conversation; *vibhratīṁ* - doing; *vallabhena* - with Your lover; *manasija* - Cupid; *sukhade* - giving joy to; *asmin* - in; *mandire* - in a temple; *smera* - smiling; *gaṇḍāṁ* - cheeks; *sa* - with; *pulaka* - goosepimples; *tanuḥ* - body; *eṣaḥ* - this; *tvaṁ* - You; *kadā* - when; *vījayāmi* - I will fan.

O Sumukhi (fair-faced girl)! When will I have goosepimples of ecstasy all over my body as I fan You in a temple that gives bliss to Cupid, where You enjoy ever-so-sweet talks with Your lover, Your cheeks blossoming with a smile as You lie on a playbed made of Mālatī-flowers?

Explanations: Devotional service coincides with relishing the *līlā-rasa*, as it did in the descriptions of Līlāśuka. Sweet pastimes burst out of each and every verse of his 'Kṛṣṇa Karṇāmṛta', showing how expert he was in relishing this sweetness. Without being transcendentally cognizant this cannot be understood. The example of this is Śrīla Kṛṣṇa dāsa Kavirāja's Sāraṅga-Raṅgadā-commentary on 'Kṛṣṇa Karnāmṛta'. One's *svarūpāveśa* will come automatically by regularly reciting Śrī Vilāpa Kusumāñjali. One feels like being right there with Svāminī. These are very powerful words, that are revealing Rādhārāṇī. There is only descriptions here of sweetness (*mādhurya*), there is not even a whiff of *aiśvarya* (lordliness) here. *mādhuryam asamordhvatayā sarva manoharaṁ svābhāvika rūpa guṇa līlādi sauṣṭhavam* (Śrī Jīva) "Unrivalled loveliness or beauty of forms, qualities and pastimes is called *mādhurya*, or sweetness." Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava-*upāsanā* is *mādhurya*. The truth of *mādhurya* is inscrutable, and it cannot be experienced without associating with *mādhurya*-devotees and without attaining the favor of the Lord. As soon as a devotee experiences *mādhuryā* he loses his taste for Kṛṣṇa's *svarūpa* (Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme, He is the Creator, He is transcendental, and the evidence of all these facts) and His *aiśvarya* (lordliness). The compilations Stavamālā of Rūpa Gosvāmī and Stavāvalī of Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī are describing the sweetness of the Divine Pair. Something can be understood of what is Rādhārāṇī by reciting Śrī Rādhā's 108 names and the 'Premāmbhoja Marandākhya Stavarāja' from Stavāvalī.

It is as if Śrī Raghunātha floats on the waves of the sweetness of the Yugala Kiśora. Both in separation and in union he relishes the stream of the amazing sweetness of Their forms, qualities and pastimes. Now a transcendental vision comes to him, and he says: "I've made a bed of Mālatī-flowers within the Madana Sukhadā-kuñja, where You're having an ever-so-sweet conversation with Your lover. I see that Your cheeks are blossoming (with goosepimples). I will serve You by fanning You, while my hairs are standing on end of ecstasy - *sapulaka-tanur esā tvāṁ kadā vījayāmi*. "Won't I fan Śyāmasundara then?" No. She fans Svāminī in such a way that Her sweet fragrance reaches Śyāma's nostrils as Her *prasāda*. That will make Śyāma feel happy and satisfied. *yasyāḥ kadāpi vasanāñcala khelanottha dhanyāti dhanya pavanena kṛtārtha mānī* (Rādhā Rasa Sudhānidhi - 2) "Madhusūdana feels His life is successful when He catches even the slightest breeze that has touched the tip of Śrī Rādhā's veil!" How wonderful is the expertise of this service! The *mañjarīs* of the *kuñja* are the teachers (*guru*) of the service of the Yugala Kiśora. The practising devotees must learn the expert service in the groves of Vraja from the eternally perfect *kinkarīs* like Tulasī. One of the 25 qualities of Śrī Rādhā that Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī enunciated is Gandhonmādita Mādhava, Her fragrance intoxicates Mādhava. Tulasī thinks: "Can I neglect the lover of My Svāminī? I will make Them both float in oceans of bliss!" Svāminī is the leader in this intimate joking conversation and enchanted Kṛṣṇa is the attendant. How submissively He inquires from Her! He cannot get enough of Her nectarean words. He feels as if they don't even touch His earlobes, although He drinks their nectar at every moment! *kohilo kāhinī puchaye koto beri* (Kavi Rañjana). Again and again He asks Her what She said to Him: *vacana amiyā rasa anukhana piyaluṁ, śruti-pathe paraśa nā bheli* (I drank the nectar of Her words constantly, but still it did not touch the paths of My ears). How submissively Śyāma keeps on inquiring! Svāminī accepts Him as Her Prāṇa Ballabha (heart's lover) and has an ever-so-sweet talk with Him. Svāminī sweetly smiles while She says: "There is nothing that I will not give You!" Because of this sweet smile She is

called 'Sumukhi', or fairfaced girl in this text. The beauty of Her face should be seen! Tulasī says: "You are not my Sumukhī, You are the Sumukhī of He who relishes the beauty of Your face!" This loving conversation takes a form. It does not float on the surface, but it enters Śyāma's heart. I see this sweet conversation in the same way as I hear it. The conversation crystallizes. So many *bhāvas* become manifest on the *bhāva vigrahā* (Śrī Rādhikā, the embodiment of ecstatic love). Svāminī says: "Śyāma! How beautiful You are!" The words that come from Her mouth are seen on all of Her limbs also. "You are really My Lover! O dearest One! I cannot live without You!"[196] Svāminī says with faltering voice:

prāṇanātha! kemon koribo āmi!
tomā vine mon, kore ucāṭan,
ke jāne kemona tumi
nā dekhi nayana, jhure anukhana,
dekhite tomāya dekhi
sowaraṇe mon, murachita heno,
mudiyā rahiye āṅkhi

"O My Prāṇanātha! What shall I do? Without You, My mind is so upset! Who knows how You are now? When My eyes don't see You, they are filled with tears and when My mind remembers You, I faint while keeping My eyes closed!"

śravaṇe śuniyā, tomāra carita,
ān nā bhāviye mone
nimiṣera ādha, pāsarite nāri,
ghumāle dekhi svapane
jāgile cetana, hārāiyā āmi,
tomā nāma kori' kāndi
parabodha dei, e rāy vasanta,
tileka thira nāhi bāndhi

"When I hear about You I cannot think of anyone else anymore, I cannot forget You for even half a moment and even when I sleep I dream about You! When I wake up I go out of My mind and I cry out Your name. This Rāya Vasanta consoles Rādhā, but She cannot stay calm for even a moment."

Sometimes She hugs Herself against Śyāma, sometimes She pulls Him on Her lap and whispers sweet words into His ears. When Tulasī sees how beautiful She is then, she calls Her 'Sumukhi'. Some feelings are expressed by colliding with the beloved, and the rest is expressed through smiles and laughter. Śyāma asks: "Shall I tell Lalitā what You have done just now?" Svāminī stutters, so Śyāma consoles Her by saying: "No, no! I won't say anything!" Rādhikā and Śyāma begin to perspire, so Tulasī starts fanning them with a whisk made of vine-buds, thinking: "I will give Śyāma the touch of Your breasts by fanning the scent of Your breasts His way! Those breasts do not want this breeze, they want pleasure! I will give Śyāma touch of Your breasts by fanning in this way, and I will give You also the touch of Śyāma's chest!" *vratati camarī cāmara marud vinodena* (Utkalikā Vallari: 52). Śyāma becomes intoxicated by that fragrance and Tulasī, seeing her service is successful, gets goosepimples of ecstasy on her skin.[197] The practising devotees should also become invigorated like this. When his service is successful he is happy and when he is deprived of devotional service he is unhappy. Devotional service helps one forget one's own interest. During the Gambīrā-pastimes Śrīla Govinda dāsa,

[196] Narrated by Śrī Ānanda Gopāla Gosvāmī.

[197] Narrated by Śrī Ānanda Gopāla Gosvāmī.

Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu's personal servant, committed a grave offense (by stepping over the Lord as He slept), but he did it just to serve the Lord, and therefore the Lord did not count this offense at all. Like a bumblebee Śyāma relishes the honey from Svāminī's lotuslike mouth. How many ages are passing during this conversation! When this vision disappears Śrī Raghunātha prays:

sukhada madana kuñje, bhramarā bhramarī guñje,
mandirete navīna yugala.
mālatī śayyāra'pori, sukhe boise śyāma gaurī,
aṅga chaṭā kore jholamola.

"In a temple in a *kuñja* that gives joy to Cupid and where the male and female bees are humming, the Youthful Couple Śyāma and Gaurī are blissfully sitting on a jasmine-bed with Their effulgent forms."

rasera prasaṅga tuli, paraspara kothā boli,
rase nimajjita kalevara.
sei vākya bhaṅgī yoto, sumadhura parāmṛta,
ucchalita gaṇḍa sarovara.

"Their forms are immersed in *rasa* as They speak *rasika* words to Each other. These words are like the highest nectar, that causes Their lake-like cheeks to swell."

he rādhe rāja-nandini! kuñjavana vilāsini,
dekhi pulakita gaṇḍasthala.
doṅhe guṇa gāhi mukhe, cāmara ḍhulabo sukhe,
bohibe ki nayanera jala?

(Śrī Haripada Śila)

"O Princess Rādhe! O girl who enjoys in the forests and the groves! When I see this, my cheeks are studded with goosepimples of ecstasy! When will tears of love stream from my eyes as I sing the glories of the both of You and I blissfully fan You with a whisk?"

.

VERSE 82:

ĀYĀTODYAT KAMALA-VADANE HANTA LĪLĀBHISĀRĀD
GATYĀṬOPAIḤ ŚRAMA VILULITAṀ DEVI PĀDĀBJA YUGMAM
SNEHĀṬ SAMVĀHAYITUM API HRĪ PUÑJA MŪRTE'PY ALAJJAṀ
NĀMA GRĀHAṀ NIJA JANAM IMAṀ HĀ KADĀ NOTSYASI TVAM

āyāta - wide; *udyat* - open; *kamala* - lotus; *vadane* - face (fem.); *hanta* - alas!; *līlā* - play; *abhisārāt* - love-journey; *gati* - pace; *āṭopaiḥ* - fast; *śrama* - fatigue; *vilulitaṁ* - pained; *devi* - goddess; *pāda* - feet; *abja* - lotus; *yugmaṁ* - couple; *snehāt* - out of love; *samvāhayitum* - to massage; *api* - even; *hrī* - shyness; *puñja* - abundance; *mūrteḥ* - of the form; *api* - even; *alajjaṁ* - shameless; *nāma* - name;

grāhaṁ - calling; *nija* - own; *janaṁ* - person; *imam* - this; *hā* - O!; *kadā* - when; *notsyasi* - engage; *tvam* - You.

O Rādhe with a face like a fully blooming lotus flower! When You go out to meet Kṛṣṇa at night Your swiftly moving feet become afflicted with fatigue. O Devi! When will You, although You are shyness personified, call me by name to massage those lotus feet? Then I know that You have accepted me as Your own!

Explanations: One *rasika* service after the other is perceived. How sweet, how confidential, how variegated are all these services! How can they (the *kiṅkarīs*), who are the embodiments of devotional service, remain alive if these services don't come to them? *rādhā-kiṅkarī-bhāva* is such a greatly elevated stage! It cannot be had without being totally absorbed, merged in the service. "Unfortunately, a person like me has no desire for devotional service. I do *bhajan* for my own welfare, and I don't understand the secrets of devotional service!" First the desire for devotional service should arise. *narottama dāsa māge sevā abhilāṣa.* The Lord also first likes to see this desire awakening within the hearts of His devotees before He blesses them by giving them service. This is the Lord's special mercy. Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī has written: *pūrṇe'pi svasmin nija sevādy abhilāṣaṁ sampādya sevakādiṣu sevādi saubhāgya sampādikā bhagavataś cittārdratāmayī tad upakārecchā* (Prīti Sandarbhaḥ 84 Anu). In the previous verse Śrī Raghunātha relished Svāminī's ever-so-sweet conversation with Śyāmasundara and was blessed with the sweet service of fanning Them. In this verse Śrīmatī calls Tulasī, who is dedicated to fanning her mistress, by name to give her another extraordinary service. Now Śrīla Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī has completed his prayers for services at noontime and he proceeds to pray for this service, which is required at nightfall. Eagerly and swiftly Svāminī goes out to meet Kṛṣṇa at the trysting place, maddened by feelings of love. Her face is covered with sweatdrops, so Tulasī calls Her Āyātodyat Kamala Vadane, the girl whose face resembles a fully blooming lotus flower. But because of walking so hurriedly Svāminī gets pain in Her tender lotus feet. Nothing can stop the very powerful course of Śrī Rādhikā's lovejourney! She considers all the ornaments She wears to be a heavy burden only. The great poet Vidyāpati sings:

nava anurāgiṇi rādhā, kachu nāhi mānaye bādhā,
ekali koyoli payāna, pantha vipatha nāhi māna
tejala maṇimaya hāra, uca kuca mānaye bhāra
kara saye kaṅkaṇa mudari, panthahi tejali sagari
maṇimaya mañjīra pāy, dūrahi teji coli yāy,
yāminī ghana āndhiyāra, manamatha hiye ujiyāra
vighini vithārala bāta, premaka āyudhe kāta,
vidyāpati mati jāno, aiche nā heriye ān

"Rādhā, the *nava anurāgiṇī* (a girl who has just fallen in love, or who feels as if she has just fallen in love) does not consider any possible obstacles: She goes out alone, not bothering about the different dangers She may encounter on the path. She takes off Her jewel necklace and considers Her own raised breasts to be a heavy burden, She takes the bangles from Her wrists and gives up everything else on the way. She flings away Her jewelled anklebells and walks on. Although the night's thick darkness envelopes Vṛndāvana Her heart is illuminated

by Cupid's flame (helping Her to find the way). The obstacles stretch themselves out on the road, but they are cut apart by the weapon of love. Vidyāpati thinks: "I have never seen such a scene anywhere before!"

This *abhisāra* is very passionate, very forceful and nothing can stop its course! It's inconceivable that She who is softer than a flower can move so swiftly. The cause of all this power is Her strong attraction to Kṛṣṇa's form. Śrī Rādhikā thinks: *sakhi! śyāma rūpa jāgaye marame, kibā niśi kibā diśi śayane svapane* "Sakhi! The form of Śyāma appears in My heart day and night, in My dream and in My sleep!" The *sakhīs* and *mañjarīs* become afraid when they see the force of Prema Pāgalinī's (Rādhikā, who is mad with love for Kṛṣṇa) lovejourney and they say: *sakhi muñca sambhramam abhisāre. cāraya caraṇāmburuham dhīraṁ sukumāre* (Rūpa Gosvāmī's Gītāvali)! "Sakhi! Give up Your zeal in meeting Kṛṣṇa! Move Your delicate lotus feet slowly!" Now Svāminī's lotus feet and indeed Her whole body begin to hurt because of the fast course of Her lovejourney (*abhisāra*). "O Devi! You will call me by name to engage me in massaging those painful lotus feet, although You are *hrī puñja mūrtiḥ*: the very form of abundant bashfulness. One of Śrī Rādhikā's 108 names is *hrī paṭṭa vastra guptāṅgī* : She whose body is concealed by a silken garment of bashfulness. *nija lajjā śyāma paṭṭa sāḍī paridhāna* (C.C.) "She wears a blue silken *sārī* of bashfulness." "You will not call anyone by name to help You with anything, but now You are calling me, because You are overwhelmed by feelings of great love for me! I am Yours only and in this way You have accepted me!" In this way the maidservant also (reciprocates and) surrenders herself to Svāminī's lotus feet. Śrīpāda Prabodhānanda Sarasvatī writes in Vṛndāvana Mahimāmṛta (Eighth Śatakam):

kṣaṇaṁ caraṇa vicchedyāc chrīśvaryāḥ prāṇa-hāriṇīm
padāravinda samlagnatayaivāharniśaṁ sthitām
.....
rādhā padābja sevānya spṛhā kāla-trayojjhitām
rādhā prīti sukhāmbhodhāv apāre buḍitām sadā
rādhā padāmbujād anyat svapnānte'pi na jānatīm
rādhā sambandha samdhāvat prema sindhaugha-mālinīm

"The maidservant feels like dying when she is separated from her Śrīśvarī's lotus feet for even a moment. She's staying by Her lotus feet day and night. In past, present or future she does not covet anything else but Rādhā's lotus feet and she's always immersed in a boundless ocean of blissful love for Her. Even in dreams she doesn't know anything else but Śrī Rādhā's lotus feet and she's like a river that swiftly runs towards the ocean of Śrī Rādhā!"

As much as Svāminī has trusts Her maidservants that much She loves them. She understands: "I can make Her serve just as I want it!" She cannot count on everyone like that. During the Rāsa-dance She sees that Her lover gets pain in His feet, so She tells Her loving *kiṅkarīs:* "Massage His feet!" "Similarly You now also order me: "Tulasī, massage My feet! I came running too quickly and I hurt My feet in this way!" How much affection Svāminī shows for Her maidservant! "O Svāmini! Will I never even get a single drop of experience of Your mercy, either in dreams, visions or *smaraṇa*?" When the devotee's heart breaks his weeping will burst out of it. His heart weeps for want of experience of this ocean of mercy. For obtaining this fortune one must exclusively surrender to Her lotus feet. Śrī Dāsa Gosvāmī gives the example.

bhajāmi rādhām aravinda-netrāṁ smarāmi rādhāṁ madhura smitāsyām
vadāmi rādhāṁ karuṇā bharārdrāṁ tato mamānyāsti gatir na kāpi

(Viśākhānandada Stotram)

"I worship Rādhā, who has lotus-eyes. I remember Rādhā, whose face sweetly smiles. I speak of Rādhā, who melts of compassion. Thus I have no other shelter than Her."

Svāminī personally lifts Her feet, that are the all-in-all for Tulasī's heart, on Tulasī's chest, because She wants to mitigate their fatigue. These feet have become unfit for playing and dancing with Kṛṣṇa. Who can measure Tulasī's bliss? She finally gets these long-desired lotus feet on her chest. Tulasī sits on a pedestal, takes Svāminī's two feet on her chest and starts to serve them. No one else but a *kiṅkarī* can understand how dear these feet are to Tulasī! Tulasī showers these lotuslike feet with oblations of her tears of love and kisses them in an unseen way, thinking: "When I have Svāminī I have everything!"

As a result of Tulasī's massage Svāminī's feet have now been cured of their fatigue. An amazing beauty blossoms on Svāminī's face. The desire to play with Kṛṣṇa was in Svāminī's heart, but the fitness to do it was not in Her feet. Now Her feet have become fit again. In the *kuñja* She holds Her feet on Śyāma's chest as She leans against Him on the bed, and thus They become eager to make love. Tulasī understands that it is more discrete to go out of the *kuñja* now. She sits outside, but keeps her ears and her mind fixed on what happens inside. Suddenly she hears an anklebell sweetly jingling: '*ṭu*'. 'I think I am being called with this sound!' The maidservant mingles with the absorption of the Yugala and enters the *kuñja* where she sees that Svāminī's hair got entangled with Kṛṣṇa's earrings. She cleverly unravels the knots and quietly leaves the *kuñja* again, leaving the Yugala Kiśora, who saw her as the personification of Their ecstatic pastimes, to Their loveplays again.[198] Suddenly the vision disappears and with anxious heart Śrī Raghunātha prays:

he devi he śrī rādhe! he lajjā puñja mūrte,
he udyat kamala nayane!
gamane naṭana līlā, kori tumi cāru śīlā,
abhisāre yāibe yokhone.
colite colite pathe, patha śrānta hoiyā tāte,
kuñja-rāja nikuñje āsiyā.
lajjā-śīlā lajjā chāḍi, ājñā dibe hema gaurī,
nija jana āmāke bhāviyā.

śrī rati mañjarī śuno, śīghro kori āgamana,
mora pada koro samvāhana.
sei śubha dina kobe, śrānta klānta pada-yuge,
ānandete koribo sevana.

(Śrī Haripada Śila)

"O golden goddess Śrī Rādhe! You are bashfulness personified! O Blooming lotus-eyed girl! Your steps, Your dancing pastimes and Your behaviour are so sweet and gentle! When You go out to meet the king of the *kuñja*, who has already arrived on the trysting place, You become tired of walking down the roads, so You give up Your bashfulness and order me, considering me to be Yours: "Listen, O Rati Mañjari! Quickly come here and massage My feet!" When will that blessed day come that I can blissfully serve Your exhausted lotus feet?"

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VERSE 83:

[198] Narrated by Śrī Ānanda Gopāla Gosvāmī.

HĀ NAPTRI RĀDHE TAVA SŪRYA BHAKTEḤ
KĀLAḤ SAMUTPANNA ITAḤ KUTO'SI
ITĪVA ROṢĀN MUKHARĀ LAPANTI
SUDHEVA KIṀ MĀṀ SUKHAYIṢYATĪHA

hā - O!; *naptri* - granddaughter!; *rādhe* - Rādhe!; *tava* - Your; *sūrya* - sun; *bhakteḥ* - of devotion; *kālaḥ* - time; *samutpanna* - has come; *itaḥ* - here; *kutaḥ* - where; *asi* - You are; *iti* - thus; *iva* - like; *roṣāt* - out of anger; *mukharā* - Mukharā; *lapantī* - talks; *sudhā* - nectar; *iva* - just like; *kiṁ* - what; *māṁ* - me; *sukhayiṣyati* - make happy; *iha* - here.

"O Rādhe! O Granddaughter! The time has come for Your worship of the sungod! Where are You?" Will these angry words of Mukharā sound like nectar to me and make me happy?

Explanations: Some peace will be found, even if the beloved deity does not directly reveal Herself, in visions, dreams or *smaraṇa*. It is to be desired that one becomes very anxious out of want for direct attainment of the beloved deity. In order to keep this eagerness alive the beloved deity does not show Herself so easily and so quickly to the loving devotee. When *sādhana bhakti* becomes filled with eagerness for the deity it culminates into *prema*. Just as it is true that we get whatever we are really eager for, similarly it is true that we cannot relish something before we become eager for it, even if we have already obtained it. The heart of the practising devotee must be filled with eagerness, for eagerness is the very heart of devotion. Without a feeling of eagerness there will be no taste for *bhajan* and without taste *bhajan* is dead or just like dead. A man has no great thirst after a glass of cold water in the winter, only in the hot summer. Similarly we may have collected so many nectarean books and we may have been initiated into such nectarean and ecstatic *mantras*, but if there is no taste for these things within us, they will not appear very nice to us. The example of devotional eagerness and anxiety that Śrīman Mahāprabhu, the descension of God who sanctifies the age of Kali, has given in His Gambhīrā-*līlā* at Puri stands before the aspirants like a mountain, even today. His example will always remain the life-force of the practising devotees, helping them to also become so greatly eager. By Śrīman Mahāprabhu's grace some of this great anxiety was also infused into Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī. The beloved deity stays at a distance and relishes the view of His devotees' eagerness behind the screen. Sometimes He gives the devotee a view of Himself. How vivid was the vision of *anurāgī* Līlāśuka! Later the Lord revealed Himself to him and said: "I am with you and I've heard all of your anxious crying for Me!" All these visions will bring the practising devotee forwards and will gradually bring him to the level of specific experiences. The practising devotees' target should be the activities of the *ācāryas*.

In the previous verse Śrī Raghunātha experienced his *caraṇa-sevā* (foot-service) of Rādhārāṇī, and in this verse he perceives Mukharā. Mukharā is the mother of Kīrtidā-devī, Śrī Rādhikā's mother. In the morning, just after Rādhikā has secretly returned home from Sevā Kuñja, where She had spent the night with Kṛṣṇa, Mukharā comes into Her bedroom and exclaims: "O Rādhe, O Granddaughter! Why are You still sleeping? Don't You know that it is sunday today? Everybody is awake already! Quickly get up, bathe and prepare Yourself for Your ritual worship of the sungod (the family deity of Her father)!" These angry words sound like nectar to Rādhikā's maidservants, because by going out for this worship, Śrī Rādhikā has

plenty of opportunity to meet Kṛṣṇa at Rādhākuṇḍa and to play all kinds of blissful pastimes with Him. One of the 108 names of Śrī Rādhikā is: *mukharā dṛk sudhā naptrī*: She is the nectarlike granddaughter for Mukharā's eyes. Mukharā is externally unfavorable to Kṛṣṇa, but within herself she actually hopes that Rādhā can meet Him.[199]

When Viśākhā hears Mukharā's angry words and sees her standing on the treshold of Śrī Rādhikā's bedroom, she gets up from bed at once and says: "*sakhi* Rādhe! Quickly get up!" Śrīmatī, lying asleep on Her bed, exhausted of Her loving pastimes with Kṛṣṇa the previous night, looks like a lordly swan stirred by the waves of a lake when Viśākhā and Mukharā disturb Her like that. She wakes up with a shock, but then She dozes off again. Then Tulasī, who knows that her time to serve has come, starts awakening Rādhikā by gently massaging Her lotus feet. Now Śrī Rādhikā slowly wakes up and sits up in Her bed. Suddenly Mukharā becomes doubtful when she sees Kṛṣṇa's yellow cloth, that Rādhikā had accidently put on before She separated from Kṛṣṇa at dawn, on Her. Doubtfully Mukharā calls out: "Ayi Viśākhe! What is this? I saw Kṛṣṇa wearing this yellow cloth last evening, and now I see it on Your *sakhī*'s body! Aho! What kind of behaviour is this for uncontaminated housewives?" Viśākhā is shocked when she sees the situation, but she quickly regains her presence of mind and says: "O Old Mukhare! O naturally blind woman! The red rays of the morningsun are shining in through the window and are making Śrī Rādhikā's blue cloth seem like golden! We also make this mistake many times, what to speak of you? Don't vainly pollute the reputation of our *sakhī*, who is the crownjewel of all chaste girls!" While Mukharā pays attention to Viśākhā's words Tulasī immediately takes Kṛṣṇa's yellow cloth away from Śrī Rādhikā and replaces it with a blue one. Seeing the blue cloth, Mukharā shyly goes away. She goes out carefully. What would happen if Jaṭilā saw this? In the Pūrva Rāga-Act of the Vidagdha Mādhava-Naṭakam Mukharā describes how Śrī Rādhā is overwhelmed by feelings of love-in-separation from Kṛṣṇa. How much everyone in Vraja loves Svāminī, who is the embodiment of deep love! How much mother Yaśodā, mother Rohiṇī and Dhaniṣṭhā love Her in Nandīśvara! The maidservant is very proud of Svāminī's glories. *guṇe kore mana pāgala* ("Your attributes madden my mind!"). Stavamālā and Stavāvalī are filled with Rādhārāṇī's sweet attributes. In his Ujjvala Nīlamaṇi Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī describes 25 attributes of Śrī Rādhā and helps the practising devotees to get acquainted with them by elucidating them. This is especially to be discussed and relished by the practitioners of *mañjarī-bhāva*. For Tulasī Mukharā's angry words sound like nectar, because she knows that Mukharā means to say: "Quickly go to the shore of Rādhākuṇḍa! Kṛṣṇa sits in the *kuñja*, waiting for You! Do You think that that is good?"[200] Meanwhile the vision vanishes and Śrī Raghunātha prays:

he naptri śrī rādhikā, nitya sūrya ārādhikā,
sūrya pūjyāra samaya ekhon.
pūjāra maṇḍapa chāḍi, kothāy giyācho pyāri,
kāra saṅge rasa ālāpana?

"O granddaughter Rādhikā! O eternal worshipper of the sun! Now is Your time for worshiping the sungod! O Dearest One! Where have You gone, leaving the altar of worship? With whom are You having *rasik* conversations?"

mukharāra ei rūpa, roṣa vākya aparūpa,
śruti mūle amṛta varṣaṇa.
nitya nava nautuna, koribo ki āsvādana,
dāsa gosvāmī kore nivedana
(Śrī Haripada Śila)

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[199] Explanation by Śrī Ānanda Gopāla Gosvāmī.

[200] This pastime is narrated by Śrī Ānanda Gopāla Gosvāmī.

"Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī prays: "When will these wonderful angry words of Mukharā shower my ears with nectar? When can I relish these everfresh words?"

.

VERSE 84:

DEVI BHĀṢITA PĪYŪṢAṀ SMITA KARPŪRA VĀSITAM
ŚROTRĀBHYĀṀ NAYANĀBHYĀṀ TE KIṀ NU SEVIṢYATE MAYĀ

devi - O goddess!; *bhāṣita* - words; *pīyūṣaṁ* - nectar; *smita* - smile; *karpūra* - camphor; *vāsitam* - scented; *śrotrābhyāṁ* - with both ears; *nayanābhyāṁ* - with both eyes; *te* - Your; *kiṁ* - whether; *nu* - indeed; *seviṣyate* - will serve; *mayā* - by me.

O Devi (goddess)! Can I serve Your nectarean words with My ears and Your camphor-scented smile with My eyes?

Explanations: Whether in separation or in meeting, Śrī Raghunātha always relishes the stream of Rādhā-Mādhava's sweetness. This full transcendental bliss is sometimes relishable in the form of joy and sometimes in the form of anguish. The stream of loving pastimes that constantly flows in the abode that transcends the three modes of material nature can always be experienced in the heart of hearts of the most fortunate devotees. Sometimes these visions even appear in the hearts of ordinary devotees, like a lightningflash appearing in the sky. Devotional practice is meant to make this blissful experience stay steadily within the heart. When this practice of remembering God 'ripens' the bird-like heart of the devotee will fly up to the planet of bliss. An inexhaustible fountain of sweetness and beauty will then burst out before the devotee's eyes. The boundless waves of love that arise in the ocean-like heart of a loving devotee can be somewhat gauged by hearing the words of a great lover of God. When a living entity experiences this everlasting bliss he attains his *svarūpa* - his constitutional position. This is the attainment of victory for the *caitanya-śakti* (the potency of transcendental consciousness), this is the attainment of *sva-rājya*, one's own state. Invigorated by *mahā-bhāva*, Śrīla Dāsa Gosvāmī relishes such a boundless bliss in both separation and meeting, that his verbal expressions are merely like thin lines on the swelling flood of the ocean of meeting and separation. The practising devotee will experience that amount of bliss by adhering to this *sūtra* (thread, or aphorism).[201]

After Tulasī relished Mukharā's nectarean words, she now wants to taste the nectar of Rādhikā's words: "O Rādhe! I want to see You smile and hear Your nectarean reply to Mukharā! The nectar of Your words is mixed with the camphor of Your soothing smile! When will I see and hear You smile and talk at the same time? Someone who drinks water mixed with camphor pleases both his nose and his tongue, similarly both my eyes and my ears will

[201] Sanskrit commentator Baṅgabihārī Vidyālaṅkāra writes: *devīti. he devi vāg-bhangī krīḍāvati* "The word *devī* comes from '*div*', which means playful. Śrī Rādhikā is called '*devi*' here because of being playful and speaking playful words that sound like nectar to the ears".

understand Your words! The face is the index of the mind, those words that are not revealed through the heart, are revealed through a smile."[202] Śrī Rādhā is the embodiment of love. *premera svarūpa deha prema vibhāvita; kṛṣṇera preyasī śreṣṭhā jagate vidita* (C.C.) "Her body consists of *prema* and She's worldfamous as Kṛṣṇa's dearmost beloved." Without being an expert knower of such emotions one cannot understand this. *prema* is visible on the inside and on the outside. Every act and every word of the *premika bhakta* (loving devotee) is sprinkled with the *rasa* of *prema* and is manifest as such. It is only by great fortune that the blessed day comes when one becomes greedy after tasting the nectar of *mañjarī bhāva*, that is manifest in the prayers of Śrīla Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī. By hearing and chanting the great words of the *ācāryas* a relish for this subject arises. Hence it is said: *ihā yei eka bāra piye karṇa dvāre; tāra karṇa lobhe iha chāḍite na pāre. rasa-tattva jñāna hoy ihāra śravaṇa; prema-bhakti pāya rādhā-kṛṣṇera caraṇa* (C.C.) "Anyone who has drunk this even once through the ears becomes greedy and cannot give it up anymore. By hearing this one realizes the truth about *rasa* and one attains loving devotion for Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa's lotus feet."

Śrī Raghunātha dāsa says: "Your words defeat the taste of nectar a hundred times. I will drink it through my ears and through my eyes." One may ask here: "Words are formless, they cannot be seen, can they? How can they then be seen by Tulasī?" This is a secret. Tulasī made Svāminī meet Kṛṣṇa in a *kuñja*. Śrīmatī is unwilling and tells Kṛṣṇa: "Don't touch Me!", but She smiles at the same time. Seeing this, Tulasī understands: 'Her mouth says: 'Don't touch me!', but She means to say: 'Touch Me!' Her 'yes' has thus swallowed Her 'no'. In this way the words "Don't touch Me!' are audible, but the words "Touch Me' are visible in the eyes. In this way Tulasī sees and hears words at the same time and thus she makes Śyāmasundara embrace Svāminī by giving Him a hint with her eyes. Old Mukharājī says: "O Rādhe! O granddaughter! It's so late, won't You do Your Sūrya-*pūjā*?" Hearing these joking words of Her maternal grandmother, Svāminī smiles slightly and says: "I thought of sending someone else out today to do this *pūjā*!" Mukharājī then jokingly replies: "You may have the Sūrya-*pūjā* done by Your girlfriends, but can You have the Mitra-*pūjā* (Mitra means both 'the sun' and 'Your friend Kṛṣṇa') done through Your girlfriends?" It is better that I leave that in Your hands!"[203] Tulasī is eagerly desiring such *rasika* talks, that are scented with the camphor of Śrī Rādhikā's slight smile. She knows that she is blessed by tasting these humorous nectarean words. The full realization of the supreme Brahman is only possible in the sweet love of Vraja, and the highest stage of Vraja-*prema* is the mood of Rādhā's maidservants. Therefore this is the highest *brahman*-realization. The Supreme Lord Śrī Vrajendra-nandana descended to earth in the form of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu and untiringly distributed this highest love to the fallen souls of the age of Kali. His sweet voice, which was anointed with love, resounds even now over the pathways of Nadīyā, through the forests of Vṛndāvana and in the Gambhīrā-cell at Purī:

hā hā kāhā vṛndāvana, kāhā gopendra-nandana,
kāhā sei vaṁśī-vadana
kāhā sei tribhaṅga ṭhāma, kāhā sei veṇu gāna,
kāhā sei yamunā pulina

"O! Where is Vṛndāvana, where is the prince of the cowherders, who holds a flute to His mouth? Where is His three-fold bending form, where is that flute-song, where is the bank of the Yamunā?" For this He went mad, for relishing this flavour He assumed the form of a tortoise, in the enchantment of these feelings the joints of His bones loosened! His sweet teachings are: Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the worshipable truth, Śrīdhāma Vṛndāvana is His eternal

[202] Explanation by Śrī Ānanda Gopāla Gosvāmī.
[203] Narrated by Śrī Ānanda Gopāla Gosvāmī.

playground, the worship in allegiance to the *gopīs* is the most lovely and Śrīmad Bhāgavata provides the spotless evidence that *prema* is the highest goal of human life.

ārādhyo bhagavān vrajeśa-tanayas tad dhāma vṛndāvanam
ramyā kvācid upāsanā vrajavadhū-vargeṇa yā kalpitā
śāstraṁ bhāgavataṁ pramāṇam amalaṁ premā pumartho mahān
śrī caitanya mahāprabhor matam idam tatrādaro naḥ paraḥ

Śrīnātha Cakravartī (disciple of Śrī Advaita and *guru* of Kavi Karṇapūra)'s Caitanya Mata Mañjuṣā)

The elaboration on this *sūtra* can be found in the books of the Gosvāmīs. The loveliness of this *upāsanā* is revealed through both the conduct and the preaching of Śrīla Dāsa Gosvāmī, whose mind is always merged with the nectarean *rasa* of Svāminī's words. Suddenly the vision vanishes and Śrī Dāsa Gosvāmī anxiously prays:

he rādhe ānanda kanda, vṛṣabhānu kulacandra
pāda padme kori nivedana.
govinda mārjita mukha, daraśane bhare buka,
dekhibo ki se candra vadana ?

"O Rādhe! O Source of bliss! O Moon of king Vṛṣabhānu's dynasty! I pray to Your lotus feet: When can I fill my heart with the vision of Your moonlike face, that is carressed by Govinda?"

smita hāsya sukarpura, ye adhara madhupure,
tāra sumadhura vākyāmṛta.
karṇānandi kalanāda, nirgalita dina rāta,
dekhi śuni juḍāibo cita.

(Śrī Haripada Śila)

"Your smile is like camphor on Your honey-filled lips, that speak very sweet, nectarean words. When I hear and see those words that delight the ears by infiltrating them day and night, I can soothe my burning heart."

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VERSE 85:

KUSUMA CAYANA KHELĀṀ KURVATĪ TVAṀ PARĪTĀ
RASA KUṬILA SAKHĪBHIḤ PRĀṆANĀTHENA SĀRDHAM
KAPAṬA KALAHA KELỊ̇Ā KVẠ̀PI ROṢEṆA BHINNĀ
MAMA MUDAM ATIVELAṀ DHĀSYASẸ̀ SUVRATE KIM

kusuma - flower; *cayana* - picking; *khelāṁ* - game; *kurvatī* - does; *tvaṁ* - You; *parītā* - accompanied; *rasa* - spiritual flavour; *kuṭila* - crooked; *sakhībhiḥ* - with Your friends; *prāṇa-nāthena sārdham* - with the Lord of Your heart; *kapaṭa* - deceitful; *kalaha* - quarrel; *kelyā* - with the game; *kvāpi* - anywhere; *roṣeṇa* - with anger; *bhinnā* - separated; *mama* - mine; *mudam* - joy; *ativelaṁ* - very much; *dhāsyase* - increase; *suvrate* - dedicated girl; *kim* - whether.

O Suvrate (dedicated girl)! Will you increase my bliss by falsely and angrily quarreling with the Lord of Your heart, being supported by Your girlfriends, who are expert in helping You in Your loving tricks while You play the flowerpicking game?

Explanations: Śrī Raghunātha has submitted a prayer to Svāminī's feet that he may relish the sweet nectarean *rasa* of Her words through both his ears and his eyes. One cannot count in how many ways Rādhā's self-manifest sweetness is relishable within Śrī Raghunātha's heart, and actually nobody is able to describe this sweetness. Although the four Vedas are constantly glorifying Śrī Rādhā they cannot reach the end. Here Sarasvatī's voice becomes silent. When the heart of Śrīman Mahādeva (Lord Śiva), that is *jñānamaya* (filled with transcendental wisdom) comes here, it merges (in Śrī Rādhā's glories), and the thousand-headed Ananta-deva goes beside Himself here. When the best of all devotees, Uddhava Mahāśaya, understood the greatness of their sweetness he prayed for birth in Vraja even as a blade of grass or a shrub to attain the footdust of the Vrajasundarīs on his head - this is described in Śrīmad Bhāgavata! Even the Supreme Lord Vrajendra-nandana cannot reciprocate with this sweet love! *ānera kā kathā āpane vrajendra-nandana; avatari koren ei prema āsvādana.* (C.C.) "What to speak of others, even Vrajendra-nandana is descending to relish this *prema*!" This verse conceals the root-cause of Śrī Gaurānga's descension: *śrī rādhāyāḥ praṇaya mahimā kīdṛśaḥ* "Śrī Gaurāṅga-deva descended to experience the sweetness of Śrī Rādhā's love". He relished this Himself and concomitantly made the people of this age also qualified to relish it. *ānuṣaṅge premamaya koilo tribhuvana* (C.C.)

In this verse Śrī Raghunātha perceives Svāminī's flower-picking-pastime. "You're picking flowers with Your crooked and *rasika* girlfriends!" This means that (in Vraja) no-one deals with Kṛṣṇa in a simple or submissive way. This is called *vāmya-bhāva*, and in this mood the erotic sweetness of the Yugala Kiśora becomes crystallized. Therefore the words *rasa kuṭila* are used here. They will quarrel with Śyāma over picking flowers. "I know You are Suvatrā! You're dedicated to the vow of delighting Śyāma. When will You delight me by engaging in such false and crooked quarrels?" That is the best vow.[204] There is no greater vow than that in the whole world. *prema* means thinking: "How can I make Kṛṣṇa happy?", and the Vraja-sundarīs are in the highest class of lovers, that are endowed with *mahā-bhāva*, which is the quintessence of *prema. premera parama sāra mahābhāva jāni* (C.C.). The minds and senses of those who are endowed with *mahā-bhāva* are saturated with *mahā-bhāva*. *varāmṛta svarūpa śrīḥ svaṁ svarūpaṁ mano nayet* (Ujjvala Nīlamaṇi) "*mahā-bhāva* consists of the greatest nectar and brings the mind to its constitutional position." Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī writes in his 'Ānanda Candrikā'-commentary on this verse: *manaḥ svaṁ svarūpaṁ nayet mahābhāvātmakam eva manaḥ syāt. mahābhāvāt pārthakyena manaso na sthitir ity arthaḥ. tena indriyāṇāṁ manovṛtti rūpatvād vrajasundarīṇāṁ mana ādi sarvendriyāṇāṁ mahābhāva rūpatvāt tat tad vyāpāraiḥ sarvair eva śrī Kṛṣṇasyātivaśyatvaṁ yukti siddhim eva bhaved iti.* "*mahā-bhāva* takes the mind to its constitutional position. This means that the minds of the girls who have *mahā-bhāva* are entirely consisting of *mahā-bhāva.* The mind has no more separate existence from *mahā-bhāva*. The senses act according to the mind's direction, and in this way the senses of the Vraja-sundarīs also consist of *mahā-bhāva*. Therefore it is logically proven that all the activities of their senses are dedicated to and dominated by Kṛṣṇa." All the Vraja-sundarīs have

[204] Explanation by Śrī Ānanda Gopāla Gosvāmī

mahā-bhāva, but Śrī Rādhā is *mahā-bhāva svarūpiṇī* Herself. She consists of nothing but *mahā-bhāva*, from the tips of Her toenails upto the top of Her head. It is certain that Kṛṣṇa is greatly delighted and controlled by each of Her physical and sensual acts, hence no one in the world is more worthy of the name 'Suvratā' than Her.

In his 'Stavamālā' (*svayam utprekṣita līlā*), Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī has nicely described how Śrī Rādhikā picks flowers in the forest. Indeed, his descriptions of this pastime are unrivalled in the kingdom of sweet *rasa*! In the morning Śrī Rādhikā feels morose. She doesn't feel like performing Her householdduties and Her mind is restless, so She goes out into the forest on the pretext of getting water for Her ritual worship, eager to see lotus-eyed Kṛṣṇa. Rūpa Mañjarī secretly follows Her to the bank of the Yamunā. Śrīmatī walks very far, until She catches Śyāmasundara's bodily fragrance and, thinking that Śyāmasundara is in the forest She proceeds towards Him like a thirsty she-bee. When She sees Kṛṣṇa standing there, dressed like a forester, She starts picking flowers, just to catch His attention. Śyāma notices Her and says: "Who is that girl, destroying the beauty of the forest by picking all the flowers there? How beautiful You are!"

bhāla vidyotita sphīṭa gorocanaṁ pārśvataḥ prekṣya taṁ vibhramal locanam
sā paṭenāvṛtā kaitavād bhāminī vakrita bhrūr abhūt dūrabhū gāminī

Śrī Rādhikā, seeing Kṛṣṇa with His forehead beautified by Gorocana-pigments, frowns Her eyebrows. Rādhikā, who is called 'Bhāminī', or powerful girl, here, pulls at Her blue garment and thus conceals Her limbs. How wonderful are Her movements! She takes some distance from Śyāma and hides Herself between the huge Jasmine-creepers on the bank of the Yamunā. Śyāma follows Her as if He is bewitched by some *mantra* and says: "You are always coming here to pick flowers and then, after cruelly breaking all the tender sprouts and destroying the beauty of the forest You hide Yourself! Who are You?" Śrīmatī replies:

sadātra cinumaḥ prasūnam ajane vayaṁ hi niratāḥ surābhibhajane
na ko'pi kurute niṣedha racanaṁ kim adya tanuṣe pragalbha vacanam

(Stavamālā)

One devotee-poet has made a beautiful Padyānuvāda (Bengali song-translation) of this and this is quoted below.

śuni vinodini mucaki hāsaye hāsi roṣe mākhāmākhi
bole śuno kālā eto boḍo jvālā eki tava rīti dekhi
āmarā suvratā deva pūjā rata niyata pūjāya mana
niti āsi āsi tuli phula-rāśi nāhi śuni kuvacana
āja keno tumi bolo heno vāṇī e tomāra yogya noy;
kohe rasarāja dhūrtera e kāja tā'te tava kibā bhaya

"Hearing this, Vinodinī (Rādhā) anoints Her smirky smile with the paste of feigned anger and says: "Listen, O Kālā (Kṛṣṇa, the black boy)! How painful it is to see Your behaviour! It's like a great fire that burns us! We are dedicated girls, and our minds are always devoted to worshiping the sungod! We always come here to pick flowers, and we never heard such rude words before! Why do You speak such words today? That's not proper of You!" Rasarāja (Kṛṣṇa, the king of relishers) says: "This is the doing of the bold king Cupid! Aren't You afraid of him?" Kṛṣṇa replies:

parijñātam adya prasūnālim etāṁ lunīṣe tvam eva prabālaiḥ sametām

dhṛtāsau mayā kāñcana śreṇi gauri praviṣṭāsi gehaṁ kathaṁ puṣpacauri

(Stavamālā)

"I understand that You have stolen many flowers and sprouts today. O golden flowerthief, now I caught You! How will You be able to go home now?"

o go! e ki gā tomāra kāja?
kulera bālikā, kānane āsite, nāhi vāsa bhaya lāja
prati dina āsi, bhāṅgiyā poyāla, pālā-o kusuma tuli
kāñcana gauri, o go phula-cauri, āra ki yāibe coli
poḍiyācho dharā, āra kothā yā'be, nāhi pā'be palāite
rasa sudhākara, āḍāle thākiyā, nehāre du'hāra rīte

"O hey! Is this Your doing? Aren't You married girls afraid and ashamed to come to this forest every day, stealing leaves and flowers, breaking the straw? O golden complexioned flower-thieves! How will you escape now that I've caught You? You won't be able to run away! Rasa Sudhākara stays in hiding and witnesses Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa's pastimes. Tender Svāminī says in a feigned harsh mood (*bhinna* or *tyakta bhāva*): "I know You are a rogue! We are worshiping the sungod! This forest is only for women! Men are not allowed here! Until now no one has ever forbidden us to come here! Who are You? Didn't You learn any manners? Whose forest is this anyway?" Śyāma says: "This forest belongs to king Cupid, who has entrusted it into My care! This king is very cruel and it was very unfair of You to steal his flowers!" Svāminī says: "There is no king Cupid here, You are that rogue Yourself! Who in Vraja does not know Your pranks?"

In this way Their sweet quarrel goes on. But by quarreling with Him in this way Svāminī became known as Suvratā, a girl who is unflinchingly dedicated to Kṛṣṇa's pleasure.[205] Śyāma feels boundless bliss when He tastes the sweetness of this quarrel. *sei bhāva yukti dekhī rādhāsya nayana. sangama hoite sukha pāya koṭi guṇa* (C.C.) "When I see Rādhā's face and eyes in this mood I feel a million times more happy than when I (sexually) unite with Her." Finally She enters a *kuñja* with Her Prāṇanātha and relishes all kinds of sweet pastimes with Him there. When the vision disappears Śrī Raghunātha anxiously prays as follows:

he suvrate subhāṣiṇi, varaja cakravartinī,
prāṇanātha giridhārī saṅge
rasete kuṭila yārā, sahacarī sucaturā,
raṅgiṇī saṅgiṇī rasa raṅge

"O dedicated Rādhe! O sweetly speaking girl! O Empress of Vraja! You play blissful *rasik* pastimes with Giridhārī, the Lord of Your life, and Your crooked, playful, clever and *rasik* girlfriends."

kusuma cayana khelā, kapaṭa kalaha chalā,
se kautuka līlā rasāyana.
boliben vaṁśīdhārī, ei kuñje curi kori,
kārā koro kusuma cayana.

"During these funny, nectarean pastimes that are played on the crooked pretext of picking flowers, Vaṁśīdhārī (Kṛṣṇa) says: "Who is picking flowers in this *kuñja*, stealing them from Me?"

dekhitechi lakṣa nārī, gaṇanā korite nāri,

[205] The explanation of this verse is by Śrī Ānanda Gopāla Gosvāmī.

rūpe guṇe sabe to samāna.
tāra madhye hemāṅgiṇī ramaṇīra śiromaṇi,
bhaya nāhi dekhi ye pramāṇa.

"I've seen hundreds of thousands of women! I can't even count them, and they're all equal in form and qualities! But amongst them You, O Hemāṅgiṇi (golden limbed Rādhe) are the crownjewel! That's clear to Me because You are not afraid!"

kāma cakravartī nāma, tāra ei kuñja dhāma,
kuñjera rakṣaka mātra āmi.
navīna pallava śākhā, bhāṅgitecho nāhi lekhā,
ki sāhasa paramāda gaṇi.

"This *kuñja*-abode belongs to king Cupid, and I am simply the *kuñja's* guardian. How dare You break off all these freshly sprouting branches! I think it's completely crazy!"

rājāra ādeśa bole, nirjana kandara tale,
śikṣā dibo nija icchā mata.
śuno vrajānganā sabe, sarvasva luṭibo ebe,
aṅgera paśarā āche yoto.

"On the order of king Cupid I will teach You a lesson in a lonely cave, just as I want it! Listen, O women of Vraja! I will loot everything from Your limbs!"

śuniyā cāturya vāṇī, dibe uttar rāja nandinī,
bāhye krodha koriyā prakāśa.
hari daraśana lābhe, bhūṣita viṁśati bhāve,
antarete parama ullāsa.

"Hearing these clever words, princess Rādhā replied. Outwardly She showed anger, but inwardly She was decorated with twenty ornaments of topmost ecstatic love from seeing Hari. "

dekhiyā rahasya līlā, he śrī rādhe vrajabālā,
ānandite hobe mora mana.
vilāpa kusumāñjali, rasāla prārthanā guli,
dāsa gosvāmīra bhajana ratana.
(Śrī Haripada Śila)

"O Śrī Rādhe! Vrajabālā (*gopī*)! Seeing this intimate pastime, my mind becomes filled with joy. Vilāpa Kusumāñjali is a collection of nectarean prayers, that is the jewel of Dāsa Gosvāmī's *bhajana*."

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VERSE 86:

NĀNĀ VIDHAIḤ PṚTHULA KĀKU-BHARAIR ASAHYAIḤ
SAṀPRĀRTHITAḤ PRIYATAYĀ TAVA MĀDHAVENA
TVAN MĀNA-BHAṄGA VIDHAYE SADAYE JANO'YAṀ

VYAGRAḤ PATIṢYATI KADĀ LALITĀ PADĀNTE

nānā - different; *vidhaiḥ* - kinds; *pṛthula* - great; *kākubharaiḥ* - with many anxious words; *asahyaiḥ* - intolerable; *samprārthitaḥ* - prayed for; *priyatayā tava* - on account of being Your beloved; *mādhavena* - by Mādhava; *tvad* - Your; *māna* - pique; *bhaṅga* - soothing; *vidhaye* - for the sake of; *sadaye* - O merciful girl!; *janaḥ* - person; *ayaṁ* - this; *vyagraḥ* - eager; *patiṣyati* - will fall; *kadā* - when; *lalitā* - Lalitā; *pada* - of the feet; *ante* - at the edge.

O Sadaye (merciful girl)! When will this maiden, after Mādhava piteously petitioned her in so many unbearable ways. knowing her to be very dear to You, anxiously fall at Lalitā's feet to plead for Him, trying to soothe Your pique at Him?

Explanations: The succession of Śrī Raghunātha's relish of Śrī Rādhā's amazing form, qualities and pastimes continues without interruption. Māna is also a kind of *rasa*. In this verse Śrī Raghunātha relishes Śrī Rādhā's *māna-rasa.* Māna is a kind of loving anger towards the beloved, and the relish of this *māna* is profuse and enormous. Sometimes Rādhā may have a reason to be angry with Kṛṣṇa, because He cheated Her with another girl, for instance, and sometimes there may be no reason. Śrī Rādhikā may be angry with Kṛṣṇa just to increase His eagerness for Her. Māna then serves as an obstacle, a kind of dam in a strong riverstream of love, which is naturally crooked, first increasing the volume of water before the dam and then dividing this stream into a hundred different branches that move in a crooked way and ultimately renovate, sweeten and reinvigorate the old stream of love. In the kingdom of love *māna* is a wonderful reviving elixir - an amazing miracle! For this renovation the Yugala Kiśora may sometimes have to go through intolerable tensions that cause new emotions to sprout on the old vines of Their hearts, and that make an emaciated, dirty face worthy to come before the mirror again. The hero will fall at the feet of the heroine, being greedy to taste more of Her sweet love and begging Māninī to give up Her pique towards Him.

Lalitā is the general of all of Rādhikā's girlfriends and Her mood is *vāma prakharā*, harsh and unsubmissive. She directs Svāminī's pique at Śyāma, just to increase His loving eagerness. Svāminī is controlled by Lalitājī's love. She Herself may not always be angry with Kṛṣṇa, but still She cannot meet Him if Lalitā does not allow it. Therefore the word *asahyaiḥ* (intolerable) in the text does not refer only to Kṛṣṇa, but also to Svāminī as well as Her maidservants. She can also not tolerate the separation from Her Priyatama.

In case our Hero is guilty: One night Svāminī anxiously waits for Kṛṣṇa in the trysting-*kuñja,* but Kṛṣṇa fails to show up until daybreak. Lalitā instructs Svāminī then to be angry with Kṛṣṇa, so Svāminī tells Śyāma:

rajani janita guru jāgara rāga kaṣāyitam alasa nimeṣam
vahati nayanam anurāgam iva sphuṭam udita rasābhiniveśam
hari hari yāhi mādhava yāhi keśava mā vada kaitava vādam
tām anusara sarasīruha locana yā tava harati viṣādam

(Gīta Govinda)

"O Mādhava! Your eyes are red from staying up the whole night! This red colour clearly shows Your attachment to another woman! Hari hari! Go Mādhava! Go Keśava! Don't speak any false words to Me! O Lotus-eyed One! Go to that woman who can soothe Your sorrow!" Or sometimes She sarcastically tells Kṛṣṇa:

chuo nā chuo nā bandhu eikhāne thāko!
mukura loiyā cāṅdamukha-khāni dekho
nayānera kājara, vayāne legeche,
kāla'ra upore kālo
prabhāte uṭhiyā, o mukha dekhilām,
dina yā'be āja bhālo

"Don't touch Me! Don't touch Me! Stay where You are! Take a mirror and look at Your own moon-like face, which is smeared with eyeliner. That black colour looks very beautiful on Your black face! When I get up in the morning seeing Your face I know that I will have a great day!"

adharera tāmbūla, vayāne legeche,
ghume ḍhulu ḍhulu āṅkhi
āmā pāne cāo, phiriyā dāḍāo,
nayana bhariyā dekhi

"I see *pān*-spots on Your face, showing signs of the lips that kissed You! Your eyes are half closed of drowsiness because You were up the whole night with this girl. Turn around and look at Me! Let Me look straight in Your eyes!"

cāṅcara keśera, cikana cūḍā,
se keno bukera mājhe
sindūrera dāga, āche sarva gāya,
morā ho'le mari lāje

"Why do I see such glossy curly hairs on Your chest? You have spots of *sindūra* (reddish powder) over Your whole body! (If I would appear before My lover like this) I would die of shame!"

nīla kamala, jhāmaru ho'yeche,
malina ho'yeche deho
kon rasavatī, pāiyā sudhānidhi,
niwāri lo'yeche seho

"The blue lotus has (wilted and) become brown, Your body has become dirty. Which *rasavatī* (amorous girl, who likes to drink juice) has attained the ocean of nectar and squeezed all the juice (*rasa*) out of it? (Which girl has exhausted My *rasika* lover?)

kuṭila nayane, kohiche sundarī,
adhika koriyā toḍā
kohe caṇḍī dāsa, āpana svabhāva,
chāḍite nā pāre corā

Sundarī (beautiful Rādhikā) said: "Your crooked eyes have become even more crooked!" Caṇḍī dāsa says: "A thief cannot give up his nature (it's too bad! A thief remains a thief!)"

Śrī Rādhikā relishes this *rasa* of *māna* very much. Her Lover sits at Her feet and prays to Her as follows:

rūpe gune yauvane bhuvane anupāma;
svapane japane mora tohāri o nāma
śuno vinodinī dhani rasamayī rādhā;
kabahu koroho jāni iha rasa bādhā
aṅgula āga paraśa yaba pāi;
sukhera sāyare rahi' ora nā yāi
locana iṅgita koru mohe dāna

"Your form, qualities and youthful beauty are unrivalled in this world. Even in My dreams I'm repeating Your names! Listen, O Vinodini (playful, delightful girl), Dhani (fortunate girl), O Rasamayī (delicious) Rādhā! I know that once You will give up this mood! When You even touch Me with the tips of Your fingers I can't find the end to the ocean of My bliss! Please give Me a wink with Your eyes! How many efforts Vaṁśī Vadana (Flute-playing Kṛṣṇa) does not make to soothe His lady's pique?

When Śyāma is unable to woo Svāminī, despite His ardent prayers, He asks Tulasī, who is just like Svāminī's shadow, to come outside of the *kuñja*.[206] How fortunate Rādhikā's maidservants are! Even the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is sought for by the Vedas, prays to them with folded hands! Tulasī cannot tolerate seeing Kṛṣṇa's pitiful condition and she consoles Him by saying: "Just wait here for a moment, I'm going to see what I can do!" When Tulasī comes back into the *kuñja* she sees that Svāminī has become *kalahāntaritā* (a girl who regrets her quarrel with her lover) and eager to meet Her Prāṇanātha once more. Tulasī says: "Hey Śyāmājū! Your lover is so pitifully praying to me for the treasure of Your affection! Why are You angry with Him?" Svāminī says; "Lalitā told Me to!"[207] One of Śrī Rādhikā's names is *lalitā bhīti māninī*, She who is angry with Kṛṣṇa out of fear of Lalitā, although She Herself wants to make up with Kṛṣṇa again. Śrī Raghunātha calls Svāminī Sadayā in this verse[208]. Seeing the situation, Tulasī understands that without Lalitā's permission the Yugala Kiśora will not be able to meet, although They are so eagerly desiring Each other. (*tayā ca tat kṛpayaiva śrī rādhā prasāda ity anudhvaniḥ*) Tulasī runs off to the *kuñja* where Lalitājī dwells. Lalitā asks Tulasī: "Tulasi! Why have you come here?" Tulasī suddenly falls at Lalitā's feet and says: "Are you just sitting here after ordering Svāminī to be angry with Kṛṣṇa?" Lalitā: "Why, what happened?" Tulasī: "They are so eager to meet Each other, I can't tolerate the sight anymore! Order the *māna bhaṅga* (breach of pique)! Svāminī is maintaining Her pique only because She respects your order!" So Lalitājī orders the breach of pique. Tulasī returns to Svāminī's *kuñja* and says: "Lalitā sanctioned the breach of Your pique!" Svāminī blooms up with bliss. This is how Tulasī accomplishes the meeting of Priyā-Priyatama (Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa)! Blessed is this

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[206] Śyāma knows that Tulasī is very dear to Svāminī, and that Svāminī cannot refuse her requests, so He asks her: *rati mañjari tubhyaṁ śape mayādya nāparādhaṁ tat kathaṁ mayi ruṣṭāsau tat svāminī hā kiṁ kariṣyāmi mayi snehavatyā kayā tayā prāṇa-preyasyā saṅgamayiṣye...hā kiṁ bhaviṣyati yamunā-bhrātrāpi vismṛto'ham ity asahyaiḥ* "O Rati Mañjari! Please let your mistress be pleased with Me once more! I swear you, today I did not do anything wrong! Why is She then angry with Me? O! What shall I do? Which affectionate girl will help Me to meet My heart's beloved again? O! What will become of Me! It's so intolerable, I have even forgotten the brother of Yamunā (Yamarāja)!" (Sanskrit *ṭīkā* Baṅgabihārī Vidyālaṅkāra)

[207] Narration by Śrī Ānanda Gopāla Gosvāmī.

[208] Śrī Baṅgabihārī Vidyālaṅkāra writes: *he sadaye kātarya śravaṇa darśanāntaram eva mānasya śaithilyad dayāvati* "She is so merciful that She slackens Her *māna* after seeing and hearing about Mādhava's aggrieved state. Hence She is named Sadayā here".

maidservant! Blessed is her service! Suddenly the vision stops and Śrī Raghunātha prays to Svāminī's lotus feet for the fortune of Her devotional service[209] —

tomāra durjaya māna, bhañjana korite kān,
kātara vinaya sahākāre
sādhibe tomāre koto, dhik prāṇe māni śata,
koriben prārthanā āmāre.

"Kāna (Kṛṣṇa) humbly and anxiously prays to me in so many ways to soothe Your invincible jealous anger, considering His life to be cursed a hundred times."

tulasī mañjarī tore, kohi go śapatha kori,
āji aparādha nāhi mora.
tathāpi āmāra prati, tomāra svāminī ati,
māna bhare hoilā kaṭhora

"O Tulasi Mañjari!", He says, "I swear You! Today I didn't do anything wrong! Still your Svāminī maintains a very tough pique towards Me!"

hāya hāya! mora prati, ke emon snehavatī,
milāiyā dibe tāra saṅge.
ei kathā śuni kāne, vyagra kobe hobe prāṇe,
korite tomāra māna-bhaṅga

"Alas! Alas! Which girl could be so kind to arrange for My meeting with Her?" When these words enter my ears I become anxious at heart and arrange for Your pique to be soothed.

lalitāra pade poḍi, kohibo binoy kori,
jānāibo kṛṣṇera vedanā.
sadayā hoiyā yabe, mora mukha pāne cābe
haraṣita hobe mora mon

(Śrī Rasika-Candra Dāsa)

"I will fall at Lalitā's feet and humbly tell her of Kṛṣṇa's heartache. When Lalitā becomes merciful and looks me in the face, my mind will be very happy".

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VERSE 87:

PRĪTYĀ MAṄGALA GĪTA NṚTYA VILASAD VĪṆĀDI VĀDYOTSAVAIḤ
ŚUDDHĀNĀṀ PAYASĀṀ GHAṬAIR BAHU VIDHAIḤ SAṀVĀSITĀNĀṀ BHṚŚAM
VṚNDĀRAṆYA MAHĀDHIPATYA VIDHAYE YAḤ PAURṆAMĀSYĀ SVAYAṀ
DHĪRE SAṀVIHITAḤ SA KIṀ TAVA MAHĀSEKO MAYĀ DRAKṢYATE

[209] Narration by Śrī Ānanda Gopāla Gosvāmī.

prītyā - with love; *maṅgala* - auspicious; *gīta* - songs; *nṛtya* - dance; *vilasat* - beautiful; *vīṇā* - lute; *ādi* - and more; *vādya* - musical instruments; *utsavaiḥ* - with festivals; *śuddhānāṁ* - of pure; *payasāṁ* - water; *ghaṭaiḥ* - with jugs; *bahu* - many; *vidhaiḥ* - with sorts; *samvāsitānāṁ* - scented; *bhṛśam* - greatly; *vṛndāraṇya* - of Vṛndāvana; *mahā* - great; *adhipatya* - queen; *vidhaye* - for the sake; *yaḥ* - who; *paurṇamāsyā* - by Paurṇamāsī; *svayaṁ* - personally; *dhīre* - O grave, calm girl; *samvihitaḥ* - performed; *sa* - it; *kiṁ* - whether; *tava* - Your; *mahā* - great; *sekaḥ* - shower; *mayā* - by me; *drakṣyate* - being seen.

O Dhīre (grave, calm girl)! When will I see Your great ceremonial bathing as You are being crowned as the queen of Vṛndāvana by Paurṇamāsī's personal arrangement? Then there is a great festival of love with dancing, singing of auspicious songs and playing of vīṇās and other instruments while You're being bathed with so many jugs of pure fragrant water!

Explanations: In the previous verse Śrī Raghunātha relished the flavours of devotional service by helping Śyāmasundara to appease Svāminī's *māna* and to meet Her again. In this verse he wants to see Svāminī as the empress of Vṛndāvana. 'With a highly auspicious ceremony, involving singing, dancing and instrumental music She was crowned as the empress, therefore this coronation-ceremony is not a secret. All the goddesses are there as well as king Nanda, king Vṛṣabhānu, the Queens Yaśodā and Kīrtidā as well as all the *gopas* and *gopīs*. Why is Kṛṣṇa not crowned here, but Rādhā? *he dhīre*! You are very grave and Kṛṣṇa is very whimsical, that is well known. Therefore You are bathed instead of Kṛṣṇa!'[210]

In the Padma Purāṇa, Pātāla Khaṇḍa, it is stated that Kṛṣṇa, being pleased with the matchless sweetness of Śrī Rādhā's attributes, made Her the queen of Vṛndāvana:

vṛndāvanādhipatyaṁ ca dattaṁ tasyai prasīdatā
kṛṣṇenānyatra devī tu rādhā vṛndāvane vane

"Although elsewhere the goddess of fortune reigns, Kṛṣṇa, being pleased with Her, made Rādhā the Queen of Vṛndāvana." Also in the Matsya Purāṇa the coronation of Śrī Rādhā is indicated with the words *rādhā vṛndāvane vane*. Following Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī, who was greatly absorbed in this pastime and described it in his one-act play 'Dāna Keli Kaumudī', his 'Rādhāṣṭakam' in the verse *atula mahasi vṛndāraṇya rājye'bhiṣiktam*, and in his 108 names of Rādhikā named Prema Sudhā Satrākhya, the nectar-sacrifice of love (*rādhā Kṛṣṇavanādhīśa* and *vṛndāvaneśvarī*), Śrīla Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī briefly described it in his 'Muktā Caritrā'-play and in his Vraja Vilāsa Stava (verse 61) and later Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī, not being fully satisfied yet, ordered Śrī Jīva Gosvāmī to write a big poetry-book about it, named 'Mādhava Mahotsava'. In this book it is described that Śrī Kṛṣṇa had ordered Vṛndā-devī, the goddess of Vṛndāvana forest, to arrange for the coronation to be performed in front of all the inhabitants of Vraja. Vṛndā became a voice in the sky that ordered Paurṇamāsī-devī, the goddess of Kṛṣṇa's mystic illusion Yogamāyā, to make all the arrangements and to announce this happy news to all the people of Vraja, headed by Nanda Mahārāja:

śrī rādhām atula guṇāmbudhīndu lakṣmīṁ śrī vṛndāvana bhuvi viśva vanditāyām

[210] Narrated by Śrī Ānanda Gopāla Gosvāmī.

yogīndre drutam abhiṣiñca kāñcanāli śrī rājan maṇi-yuji siṁhapīṭha prṣṭhe
rādhāyām ayam abhiṣeka kānti puraḥ śrīdaḥ syād vanam anu gokula-bhuvaṁ ca
aṁśūnām udaya ivāmṛtāṁśu mūrtau yad yogye khalu vibhavo'khilaṁ dhinoti

(Mādhava Mahotsava 4:10-11)

"O Queen of *yogīs* Paurṇamāsi! Quickly bathe this Śrī Rādhā, who is the Candra Lakṣmī (the lunar goddess of beauty) arising from the ocean of matchless attributes, in the universally praised Śrī Vṛndāvana, on a very beautiful jewel-studded golden throne! The stream of lustre of Śrī Rādhā's *abhiṣeka* will bring a matchless treasure of beauty to Vṛndāvana, to Gokula and to the whole world, just as the moonlight comes from the moon. Because when the sanctifying grace has become the object (of worship), love will be given to the whole world." Then, in front of everyone, the ethereal voice requests the most shy girl Rādhikā to accept the royal bathing-ceremony:

he rādhe tvam iha ca māsma dhārṣṭyā buddhyā saṅkocīryād idam aśeṣa duḥkha hantṛ
śālīnā api kula kanyakāḥ sabhāyāṁ dṛśyate pati varaṇāya vīta lajjāḥ

(Mādhava Mahotsava 4:17)

"O Rādhe! Don't hesitate to act boldly in this! You will be the destroyer of unlimited misery! It is, after all, also seen that even the most shy maidens give up their shyness when they accept a husband!" When Śrī Rādhā and Her girlfriends repeatedly drink the honey-like message of this ethereal voice through the cups of their ears they embrace Each other. All the people of Vraja-*maṇḍala* make ecstatic noises and the playing of many kinds of musical instruments become audible. Kundalatā announces this blissful news all throughout Vraja. Kṛṣṇa's bliss knows no bounds! The *ādhi-vāsa*-ceremony (a ceremony held one day before an auspicious festival) is itself a great occasion with different kinds of auspicious dances, songs and instrumental music. On the day of the *abhiṣeka* all moving and non-moving creatures of Vraja are enchanted by Śrī Rādhikā's wonderful beauty as She approaches the bathing-platform. As Śrī Rādhikā steps on the jewelled bathing-platform, Yamunā, Ekānaṁsā-devī (Kṛṣṇa's sister from the jail in Mathurā, eight-armed Durgā), Rudrāṇī (Pārvatī), Indrāṇī (Śacī) - all the goddesses come there in human forms.

tahi puna bhagavati paurṇamāsī-devī vraja vana-devakī sātha
rāika śubha abhiṣeka karaṇa lāgi āola ulasita gāta
koto śata ghaṭa bhari' vāri suvāsita tahi korolo upanīta
dadhi ghṛta gorasa kuṅkuma candana kusuma-hāra sulalita
vāsa bhūṣaṇa upahāra rasāyana ānala koto parakāra
ratana vedīropara baiṭhala śaśimukhī sakhī-gaṇa dei jayakāra
'śrī vṛndāvana bhūmīśvari' kori bhagavatī koru abhiṣeka
caudike jaya jaya maṅgala kalarava ānande mohana dekho

(Pada Kalpataru)

When Śrī Rādhā steps on the wonderful jewelled throne the luster of Her form illuminates the whole of Vṛndāvana. Then, on the order of Paurṇamāsī, who had come there with Vraja's sylvan goddesses, Mānasī Gangā, Yamunā, Sarasvatī and other sacred waters appear in scented jewelled jugs to shower Rādhārāṇī along with *ghī*, milk and yoghurt. All the *sakhīs* chant 'Jaya! Jaya! while different songs are sung and dances are performed. After the bathing the *sakhīs* dress Śrīmatī in an appropriate royal dress. Ekānaṁsā touches

Śyāmasundara's forehead, puts Śrī Rādhā's *rāja ṭīkā* (royal emblem) on it and exclaims: 'Jaya Vṛndāvaneśvari!' Along with the sound of many instruments the shouting of 'Jaya! Jaya!' arises. The *devas* shower flowers and the *sakhīs* blow conches and make the *ulu dhvani* (by uttering a sound while moving the tongue in the mouth). All the goddesses come forward with presents: Sāvitrī, Lord Brahmā's wife, gives Rādhikā a lotus-garland, Indra's wife Śacī-devī presents a golden throne, Kuvera's wife Ṛddhī a golden ornament, Varuṇa's wife Gaurī a golden scepter, Vāyu's wife Śivā a white whisk, Agni's wife Svāhā a fine *sārī*, and Dhūmorṇā, the wife of Yamarāja, a jewelled mirror while the gods in heaven play Dundubhī-drums. After offering the proper respect to the different attendant superiors she takes leave of them.

Now a new *rasika līlā* will be played. The *sakhīs* will divide the positions of servants and friends in Queen Rādhā's kingdom. Śyāmasundara eagerly desires the service of Śrī Vṛndāvaneśvarī, so He submits his wish to prime minister Lalitā:

tabe atiśaya ānanditā; śrī kṛṣṇere kohen lalitā
vanamāli! śuno mora vāṇī; ki sevā loibe bolo tumi
sakhīgaṇa sevā bāṅti nilo; yāra ye vāsanā mone chilo
heno sevā āra nāhi dekhi; yāhāte tomāra nāma lekhi
śuniyā kohen banoyāri; mora sevā āche boḍo bhāri
āmi rājyera kotoyāla hoibo; rāja jaya ghuṣiyā beḍābo

(Pada Kalpataru)

In great ecstasy Lalitā told Śrī Kṛṣṇa: "Listen to my words, O Vanamāli! Which service will You take, tell me? The *sakhīs* have already chosen the service they liked, but I can not find any service that I can write Your name on. Hearing this, Banoyāri (forest-dweller) Kṛṣṇa said: 'I have a very important service: I will become the kingdom's constable and I will wander around announcing the Queen's victory!'" On minister Lalitā's order Śyāma, who wants the job of constable, writes a letter of application to the Queen:

jaya jaya śrī śata, śrī yuta padanakha, mahā mahimārṇava caraṇeṣu
caturiṇī śiromaṇi, viśva vimohinī, yūthapatigaṇa seviteṣu
śrī vṛndāṭavī, rāja rājeśvarī, prabala pratāpa śālinīṣu
koṭi madana mada, parābhava kāriṇī, nija janagaṇa jīviteṣu

"Glory to You whose footnails are more beautiful than those of hundreds of goddesses of fortune! Glory to the lotus feet of the great ocean of glory! Glory to the crown-jewel of clever girls, the world enchanting girl who is served by hosts of rulers! Glory to the empress of Śrī Vṛndāvana, the abode of great power! Glory to She who defeats millions of Cupids and who is the very life of Her friends!"

.....

tai ei rājakara, kotoyālapada dei, karabahi mohe cira dāsa
ehi vinati mora, mānobi nā ṭārabi, karajoḍe māgo tuyā pāśa
hām tuyā nāma yaśaḥ, kuñja kuñja prati, ghoṣabo prati dina yāma.
tuyā pura bhitora, cora yadi āobo, viphala hobo tachu kāma
ehi vidhī sevā, nija prati lahari, pālabi nija ṭhākurāla.
jaya jaya rādhā, vṛndāvipinādhīśa, gāobo hāma cirakāla

(Pada Kalpataru)

"I am standing before You with folded hands! Please accept Me at Your side as Your eternal servant! Give Me the job of royal constable! Heed My humble words and don't kick

Me away! Every day and night I will announce Your glories from *kuñja* to *kuñja* and if any thief may enter Your town I will make sure he will fail in his purpose! I will always continue My service, maintaining Your authority and singing Your names: 'Jaya Jaya Rādhā Vṛndāvipinādhīśa (queen of Vṛndāvana)!"

By the mercy of the Queen and with the help of the *sakhīs* Śyāma gets the job of constable and He dresses and ornaments Himself accordingly. The enchanting constable announces to all the moving and non-moving creatures of Vṛndāvana: "O animals, birds, cuckoos, bees, trees, vines, sky and wind of Vṛndāvana! Listen! From today on the daughter of king Vṛṣabhānu, Śrī-Śrī Rādhārāṇī, is the Queen of Vṛndāvana!" Hearing this sweet announcement of their enchanting constable, and seeing His ecstatic condition, all the creatures of Vṛndāvana, whose hearts are naturally given to Śrī Rādhā, fill the sky with their ecstatic warbling. Then, after announcing the reign of Vṛndāvana's empress, the enchanting constable tells Her how ecstatic all the creatures of Vṛndāvana were to hear it.

After this the prankish constable Kṛṣṇa secretly hides His flute in Lalitā's veil and goes to the Queen to complain that His flute was stolen. Viśākhā says: "Very good, that destroyer of the housewives' chastity is gone! Good riddance! Now the housewives can sleep in peace!" But grave Queen Rādhā says: "No Viśākhe, that is not proper! This kingdom will perish if it gets the reputation that theft is an accepted thing here!" Prime minister Lalitā chastises the constable and demands His resignation, saying: "How can this constable protect other people's property when He cannot even keep His own things together? It would be good for the kingdom if He resigned!" Then the constable submits to Mahārāṇī's feet: "One of the royal executives has stolen the flute, what can a low-rank constable do against that?" Hearing this, Prime minister Lalitā angrily orders: "Everyone open their veils and show to the constable that you don't have the flute! This falsely suspicious high official deserves a severe punishment for uttering false accusations if the flute is not found on anyone!" Everyone follows the prime minister's order, and when finally Lalitā opens her own veil - lo and behold! The flute falls out! Everyone is stunned. Then the constable says: "O Queen! Such a thief-minister should resign, otherwise the kingdom will suffer tremendously!" Who can describe Lalitā's rage at that time? She says: "You Yourself have hidden the flute in my clothes, and then You went to the Queen to complain! I swear on the Queen's feet: This is Your doing!! Do You dare to deny it by taking an oath, touching the Queen's lotus feet?" The constable's hands shiver of ecstasy when they touch Rādhārāṇī's feet, His eyes are filled with tears and His body is studded with goosepimples. *hiyāra mājhāre uṭhe rasera hiloli. yabe paraśite cāhi tomāra pāyera aṅgulī*. Although Kṛṣṇa is the very form of transcendental bliss He is enchanted by *rasa*, and His voice chokes out of ecstatic inertia. Then Lalitā says: "Look Mahārāṇi! The personification of religion is touching Your feet! Why would any lies come from His mouth?"

nāgare kampita dekhi' rasavatī rāi; hāsi hāsi baṅdhu kore dharilen yāi
gada gada kaṇṭhe kohoye dhani vāṇī; marama kohiye ebe śuno nīlamaṇi
nija vāñchā pūrāile more rājā kori; mora sādha pūrāite hoibe murārī
o veśa pheliyā nija veśa poḍo tumi; siṁhāsane boisoho kiṅkarī hoi āmi

"Seeing Her lover trembling, Rāi laughed and held Him, making Him Her friend. With faltering voice She said: 'O Nīlamaṇi (blue jewel)! Now listen! I'll tell You what's on My mind! You fulfilled Your desire by making Me the Queen, O Murāri! Now My desire will be fulfilled: Give up this dress and wear Your own dress. Sit on the throne! I am Your maidservant!" Then Vṛndādevī makes a royal dress for our Hero and Rasika Śekhara Kṛṣṇa ascends the jewelled throne, sitting on Kiśorīmaṇi's left side. The *sakhīs* are chanting 'Jaya! Jaya!' and make the *ulu*-sound with their tongues of ecstasy while the *kiṅkarīs* are fannning Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa.

āhā mari! kibā du'ṭī rūpa anupāma
rūpa anupāma go du'ṭī rasamaya dhāma

"O my goodness! Their two forms are matchless, matchless abodes of *rasa*!"

ādha kanaka kāṅti, nava vijurī bhāti,
ādha rase ḍhara ḍhara nava ghanaśyāma
vayāne vayāna, doṅhāra nayāne nayāna
(janu) cāṅde cāṅde kamale kamale eka ṭhāma

"Half is a golden luster shining like a fresh lightning-strike, and half is a fresh monsoon-cloud showering drops of *rasa*. His face meets Her face, His eyes meet Her eyes. The moon and the moon and the lotus and the lotus are thus shining in one place."

ati parama rasāla, duhu gole eka phulamāla
aṅge aṅga helāheli aparūpa ṭhāma
kiye kamale bhramara, kiye cāṅdete cakora,
(nava) cātakiṇī suvadanī jaladhara śyāma

"They are most luscious, Each wearing one flower garland around the neck. Their matchless bodies are leaning against Each other. Fair-faced Rādhikā desires Śyāma as the bumblebee the lotus flower, the Cakora-bird the moon and the female Cātakiṇī-bird the monsoon cloud".

nāce mayūra mayūrī, gāya śuka āra sārī,
phule phule bhramara bhramarī dharu tāna
nava jalada kole, thira vijurī khele,
koto rasa varikhaye duṅhu rasadhāma

"The peacocks and peahens dance and the parrots and *sārikās* sing while the bumblebees and their wives are singing, flying from flower to flower. A steady lightning-strike (Śrī Rādhikā) plays on the lap of a fresh raincloud (Kṛṣṇa). How much *rasa* is showered by both these abodes of *rasa*!"

yoto sakhī mañjarī, doṅhāra mādhurī heri,
bolota gheri gheri 'jaya rādhe-śyāma !'
yoto sahacarīgaṇa, kore puṣpa variṣaṇa,
'rādhā-rādhā ramaṇa' boli gāya avirāma

"Seeing Their sweetness all the *sakhīs* and *mañjarīs* surround Them and say "Jaya Rādhe-Śyāma!" All these *sakhīs* shower flowers and say 'Rādhā-Rādhā Ramaṇa' without stopping."

In his vision Śrī Raghunātha, in his *svarūpa* of Tulasī Mañjarī, relishes the flavours of this transcendental pastime, and when this vision leaves him he anxiously prays to Svāminī's lotus feet for another vision of this pastime.
Śrī Rasika-Candra Dāsajī sings:

hāya! mora heno bhāgya hobe koto dine ?
he dhairya śālini rādhe, ei mora manaḥ sādhe,
tava abhiṣekotsava heribo nayāne.

"Alas! When will that blessed day come? O Grave Rādhe! This is the desire on my mind! I want to see Your coronation-festival!"

bājibe maṅgala vādya, veṇu vīṇā murajādya,
nṛtya gīta hobe manohara.
suvāsita śuddha vāri, ghaṭa sab pūrṇa kori,
paurṇamāsī svayaṁ tatpara

"Auspicious instruments, like the drum, the flute and the *vīṇā*, will be played and there will be enchanting dancing and singing. Paurṇamāsī is personally engaged in filling up the jugs with pure scented water."

atiśaya prīta hoiyā, tava abhiṣeka kriyā,
koribe yatnate sampādana.
vṛndāvana mahārājñī, heriyā kobe go āmi,
saphala mānibo e jīvana.

"With great love she will arrange everything for Your bathing-ceremony as the Queen of Vṛndāvana. When will I make my life a success by witnessing this scene?"

.

VERSE 88:

BHRĀTRĀ GO'YUTAM ATRA MAÑJU-VADANE SNEHENA DATTVĀLAYAṀ ŚRĪDĀMNĀ KṚPAṆĀṀ PRATOṢYA JAṬILĀṀ RAKṢĀKHYA RĀKĀ-KṢAṆE NĪTĀYĀḤ SUKHA ŚOKA RODANA BHARAIS TE SAṀDRAVANTYĀḤ PARAṀ VĀTSALYĀJ JANAKAU VIDHĀSYATA ITAḤ KIṀ LĀLANĀṀ ME'GRATAḤ

bhrātrā - by Your brother; *go* - cows; *ayutam* - ten thousand; *atra* - there; *mañju* - beautiful; *vadane* - face (fem.); *snehena* - with affection; *dattvā* - having given; *ālayaṁ* - the abode; *śrīdāmnā* - by Śrīdāma; *kṛpaṇāṁ* - to the miser; *pratoṣya* - for satisfying; *jaṭilāṁ* - to Jaṭilā; *rakṣa ākhya* - known as Rakṣa; *rākā* - full moon; *kṣaṇe* - moment; *nītāyāḥ* - taken; *sukha* - happiness; *śoka* - sorrow; *rodana* - crying; *bharaiḥ* - with abundance; *te* - Your; *saṁdravantyāḥ* - melting; *paraṁ* - greatest; *vātsalyāt* - out of love; *janakau* - parents; *vidhāsyata* - will do; *itaḥ* - here; *kiṁ* - whether; *lālanaṁ* - cuddling; *me* - of me; *agrataḥ* - before.

O Mañju-vadane (fair-faced girl)! On the full moon day of Śrāvana (August) named Rakṣa Pūrṇimā Your brother Śrīdāma comes to Yāvata with ten thousand cows to satisfy the greedy Jaṭilā before affectionately taking You along to Varṣānā, where Your parents lovingly cuddle You in front of me as You melt with weeping from happiness and sorrow.

Explanations: One *līlā*-picture after the other arises before the spiritualised eyes of Śrī Raghunātha, and when his relishable visions vanish he laments and manifests another prayer. His mind is immersed in the ocean of the sweetness and beauty of the Divine Pair, and there the treasure of eloquence has very little value (i.e. it is very difficult to put it under

words). Words are totally helpless here. Still the stream of *bhāva* naturally wants to come out over the path of words, but alas! Words are not able to hold such a powerful stream! Words become stunned here, strangled and suffocating in the grip of *bhāva*! In this situation *bhāva* blooms up in the heart of anyone who depends on it and comes to a sensitive devotee in only a slight way in the form of words. But still it is as if this *dīnā bhāṣā* (inferior medium of words) thrusts a huge stream of water on the heart's ears of a *bhāvagrāhī* (sensitive) audience, helping the *bhāva* of a sensitive devotee (like Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī) to reveal itself. The power of the speaker's *bhāva* is infused in his words, therefore their result, prowess, influence and authority are endless and inexhaustible. That is why there is no greater means to attain *bhāva* than to hear and chant the *bhāvamaya vāṇī* (ecstatic words) of the great saints. In the previous verse Śrī Raghunātha relished the sweetness of Rādhārāṇī's coronation, and in this verse he relishes the parental love of mother Kīrtidā and father Vṛṣabhānu, the personifications of parental love, as Svāminī goes to Her parental home. The *pāda-sevikās* (maidservants) like Tulasī stay with Svāminī as if they are Her shadow, and they experience all of Svāminī's joy and sorrows just like Her, as if Her feelings are reflected in the mirrors of their hearts. The great poet Karṇapūra, who sucked the nectar out of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu's toe, describes this as follows in his book 'Alaṅkāra Kaustubha' (3.59):

pataty asre sāsrā bhavati pulake jāta pulakāḥ
smite bhāti smerā sumalimani jāte sumalināḥ
anāsvādya svālir mukuram abhivīkṣya sva vadanaṁ
sukhaṁ vā duḥkhaṁ vā kim api kathanīyaṁ mṛga dṛśaḥ

Śrī Kṛṣṇa says: "O fawn-eyed girls! As long as you did not meet your girlfriends you can see in the mirror whether you are happy or sad, but when your girlfriends stand before you, then what is the use of mirrors for you? They are just like mirrors themselves! When tears are falling from your eyes they also fall from their eyes, when you have goosepimples on your body, they also have them, when you laugh, they also laugh and when you are morose they are also sad!" This situation is visible to the utmost in Rādhā's maidservants.[211]

One day before this auspicious event Śrīdāma mounts his horse and goes to Yāvata, the abode of Śrī Rādhikā's mother-in-law Jaṭilā. Eager to satisfy Jaṭilā, who does not want to let Śrī Rādhikā go, Śrīdāma asks her: "What do you want as a present?" Jaṭilā, as he expected, wants cows, so he gives her ten-thousand cows just to appease her. In Śrī Rādhikā's parental home there is less control over Her than in Yāvata. There it is easier for Śrī Rādhikā to go out to meet Kṛṣṇa. Everyone in Vṛndāvana, knowingly or unknowingly, assists Rādhikā and Mādhava in Their relish of *śṛṅgāra* (erotic) *rasa*! There is one kind of relish of this *śṛṅgāra rasa* when Śrī Rādhā stays in Her in-laws' abode, and there is another kind of relish when She stays in Her parents' abode. The *kiṅkarīs* come along with Śrī Rādhikā wherever She goes and are thus blessed with these different kinds of savour. That's why the service of Śrī Rādhā is called the most extraordinary goal of life.

When they arrive mother Kīrtidā, the emblem of parental love, who was anxiously looking down the road for her beloved daughter to come, pitifully cries out: "O Creator! Why have you created this subservient womens' life, so that I must be separated from my daughter for so long?" Mother Kīrtidā, who loves her daughter even more than millions of cows could love their calve, firmly embraces Śrī Rādhikā, who is followed by Tulasī like Her shadow, and sprinkles Her with her tears of motherly love. One of Śrī Rādhikā's 108 names is: *mātṛ sneha pīyūṣa putrikā*: "She is the nectarean object of motherly love for a daughter". Svāminī cries of

[211] The Rakṣā Pūrṇimā is an auspicious day, occurring on the full-moon-day of August, on which brothers and sisters swear love and protection to each other by binding protecting armlets around each other's wrists. Therefore this pastime, like the previous one, is an occasional, annual pastime, not an eternal daily one. Ed.

happiness and sorrow. Happiness because of coming back home and sorrow because of Her long stay at Her in-laws' abode. Svāminī melts at the bosom of Her mother, as if She merges with her and sheds hot tears, saying with choked voice: "Just forget about Me, mā! Don't search for Me!" Śrī Rādhikā is named Mañju-vadane, or fair-faced girl in the text.[212] Kīrtidā Mā sobs with a voice choked by tears: "Can I ever forget You, my beautiful girl?" She who is *vraja go gopa gopālī jīva mātraika jīvanam*:[213] the very life of the cows, cowherders, cowherd-women - nay, of all creatures of Vraja! How much then isn't She the life of the life of Her mother, who is the very form of parental love?! Who will say it? Mother and father float in oceans of bliss as they take their girl into their abode.

Śrī Raghunātha relishes the vision of Svāminī being affectionately cuddled by Her father and mother, and when the vision vanishes he rolls on the bank of Rādhākuṇḍa and weeps: "I've fallen on the bank of Your *kuṇḍa*! I have a great hope in my heart to once see You being cuddled like this by Your father and mother!" How wonderful is the prowess of Rādhā's service! Even in external consciousness prayers are offered in this mood! How close the *kiṅkarī* is to Svāminī! Unless She accepts you you won't understand! Both in meeting and in separation Śrī Raghunātha has no other shelter but Her, therefore for the fulfillment of his heart's aspirations he prays as follows to Her lotus feet:

he rādhe he suvadane, rākhī pūrṇimāra dine,
tava bhrātā śrīdāma āsiyā.
kṛpaṇā se jaṭilāre, go ayuta dāna kore,
samādare tāhāre tuṣiyā.

"O fairfaced Rādhe! On the Rākhī Pūrnimā-day Your brother Śrīdāma comes to see You, and he respectfully satisfies the miserly Jaṭilā by giving her ten thousand cows."

āpana āloye yabe, tomāre loiyā yābe,
atiśaya snehādara kori.
tathā bahu dina pore, mātā pitā donhe here,
antarete sukha uṭhe bhari.

"Then he brings You to Your parental home with great love and care, where Your parents are very happy to see You again after so many days."

sadā paravaśa ho'ye, thākiyā śvaśurālaye,
mano madhye duḥkha atiśaya
harṣa śoke sei kāle, bhāsibe nayana jale,
dravībhūta hoibe hṛdoy

"Their hearts are melting and they float in their own tears when they see You crying, crying out of great sorrow for being always controlled by Your husband's family, and crying out of joy over seeing them (Your parents) back again."

tabe ati snehavaśe, tava mātā pitā ese,
koriben sayatne lālana.
'rodana samvara' bole, nija bhāsi āṅkhi jale,
muchāibe tomāra vadana.

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[212] Śrī Baṅgabihārī Vidyālaṅkāra explains: *he mañju-vadane vāṣpa vyāptatvena mañju sudarśanaṁ vadanaṁ yasyāḥ* "Her face is so beautiful because it is studded with tears. Hence She is called Mañju Vadane."

[213] Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī's '108 names of Rādhikā'.

"Then, overwhelmed by affection, Your parents come to carefully and lovingly cuddle You, telling You to stop crying while You float in Your own tears, and wiping Your face."

nikaṭe thākiyā hāya, se lālana samudāya,
nehāribo mone abhilāṣa.
kobe se karuṇā hobe, ei sukha more dibe,
bāḍhāibe apāra ullāsa.

(Śrī Rasika-Candra Dāsa)

"When can I blissfully witness from closeby how they are cuddling You? Alas! When will You be so kind to increase my ecstasy in this way?"

.

VERSE 89:

LAJJAYĀLI PURATAḤ PARATO MĀṀ
GAHVARAṀ GIRIPATER BATA NĪTVĀ
DIVYA GĀNAM API TAT SVARA-BHEDAṀ
ŚIKṢAYIṢYASI KADĀ SADAYE TVAM

lajjayā - shyly; *ali* - Your girlfriends; *purataḥ* - in front; *parataḥ* - far away; *māṁ* - me; *gahvaraṁ* - cave; *giri* - mountain; *pateḥ* - of the Lord; *bata* - alas!; *nītvā* - having taken; *divya* - divine; *gānam* - songs; *api* - even; *tat* - that; *svara* - voice; *bhedaṁ* - different; *śikṣayiṣyasi* - You will teach; *kadā* - when; *sadaye* - O merciful girl!; *tvam* - You.

O Sadaye (merciful girl)! When will You shyly take me far away from Your girlfriends to a cave of Govardhana Hill to teach me beautiful songs in different tunes there?

Explanations: Śrī Raghunātha's heart is absorbed in the forms, qualities and pastimes of his beloved deity. In the mood of a maidservant he relishes Śrī-Śrī-Rādhā-Mādhava's sweetness. How much Svāminī loves Her intimate maidservant is known through the prayer in this verse. "Without me even wanting it Svāminī is accepting me as one of Her own. From this I understand that She loves me. Without me even wanting it Svāminī is so merciful to take me along to a cave of Govardhana Hill to teach me divine songs with different tunes and meters." *lajjayāli purataḥ parato giripateḥ gahvaraṁ nītvā* "Shyly She takes me far away from Her girlfriends to a cave of Govardhana Hill to teach me singing." Why should She be shy? Her *sama-prāṇā sakhīs* are not strangers to Her! In front of Her *sakhīs* She cannot teach all kinds of songs. These songs are not ordinary songs - *divya gānaṁ*: they are divine songs. Svāmini is shy, because She knows that Her girlfriends understand that She will teach Tulasī intimate songs about Her love-affairs with Śyāma. These songs are not meant for the *sakhīs*' ears, because they will make them mock Svāminī. These confidential and wonderful songs can

not be heard by anyone else but Svāminī's most intimate maidservants. They are meant to be sung by Tulasī while Svāminī is alone with Śyāma and Śyāma has fainted out of amorous ecstasy.[214] With their extraordinary beauty and sweetness the Vraja-sundarīs are able to astonish Śrī Kṛṣṇa - hence their love is called *samarthā rati.* The love of a pure devotee has such extraordinary power and glory that it astonishes Śrī Kṛṣṇa: *bhaktera prema ceṣṭā dekhi kṛṣṇera camatkāra* (C.C.). The love of the Vraja-sundarīs is of the highest class, hence their *samarthā rati* is most astonishing. The sweetness of the love of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī, who is endowed with Mādanākhya Mahābhāva, is astonishing Kṛṣṇa so much that it makes Him faint. Even Svāminī is then baffled and unable to find a means to reawaken Him. Only Her maidservants, that are well trained in the art of singing divine songs, are able to break this swoon - no one else. This is what distinguishes the *kiṅkarīs* from the *sakhīs*. This is the very confidential service rendered by the maidservants!

One day Rādhikā and Śyāma are playing together in a *kuñja* when Śyāma faints out of ecstasy. No matter what Svāminī tries, She can not bring Kṛṣṇa back to His senses. The boat-like mind of enchanting Mohana has sunk in the bottomless ocean of Śrī Rādhikā's beauty and sweetness. Svāminī is desperate. She cannot find anyone who can pull Śyāma out of this deep ocean-like swoon. Then Tulasī, who sits outside with her back against the wall of the *kuñja*, begins to sing a beautiful song. When Śyāma hears this song about Svāminī's sweetness He slowly comes back to His senses and becomes fit again to continue the loveplay. These songs cannot be taught in the presence of the *sakhīs*, therefore they are taught within the caves of Govardhana Hill. The subject of these songs are the various pastimes of Rasarāja Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Mādanākhya Mahābhāvavatī Śrī Rādhā. Śrī Rādhikā Herself is the subject of these songs, so She can not sing it Herself to bring Kṛṣṇa back to life. A third person is necessary and a maidservant of Śrī Rādhā is the most fitting person to do it. Of all maidservants, Tulasī is again most intimate with Śrī Rādhikā, so Svāminī calls her into a cave of Govardhana Hill to teach her these intimate songs in different tunes. This is the limit of human perfection, the great gift of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu.[215] Without *bhāva* (feeling) one cannot taste *rasa* (spiritual flavour), without *rasa* there can be no development of *bhāva,* and without *bhāva* and *rasa* there can be no *ānanda*. This is a wellknown truth. If we try to realize the purport of these words, then we can understand that even a slightest drop from the stream of topmost transcendental bliss that constantly floats from the fountainhead of all universal causes, Mahābhāva (Rādhā) embraced by Mahārasa (Kṛṣṇa), is keeping the whole world alive. The main item that is to be ascertained from the Vedic scriptures was described in Śrīmad Bhāgavata, which is the essence of the Vedānta. According to the Bhāgavata the limit of attainment is the *mahā bhāva* of the *gopīs* in the Rāsa-*līlā*. A human being is unable to advance or to know anything beyond this. If anyone can reveal anything beyond this, then he can not be anyone else but the Supreme Absolute Truth, God Himself, that should be known for sure. That confidential *mañjarī bhāva* - which is not even found by searching through the Rāsa-*līlā* chapters of Śrīmad Bhāgavata - is the merciful gift of Śrī-Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanyadeva, who is the combined form of Rasarāja (Kṛṣṇa, the king of relishers) and Mahābhāva (Rādhikā, the Supreme Love) and its manifestation and preaching has come through the *ācāryas* who took shelter of His lotus feet.

Now Śrīmatī will examine if Tulasī has properly learned the songs. This examination is also so wonderful! The cave of Govardhana Hill is like a wonderful temple of play. Svāminī takes a Vīṇā in Her hand and teaches a sweet song. The song itself is endlessly sweet and on top of that there is Svāminī's own nectarean voice. This sound attracts Śyāmasundara, who comes close and stares through a slit in the cave at the beauty of Śrīmatī's form. She is there alone with Tulasī. Her head is not covered by Her veil and Her fingers, that defeat the beauty

[214] Narrated by Śrī Ānanda Gopāla Gosvāmī.

[215] Narrated by Śrī Ānanda Gopāla Gosvāmī.

of golden Campaka-buds, twang the strings of the Vīṇā. Along with the strings of the Vīṇā She twangs the strings of Śyāma's heart! How wonderfully Her jewelled rings are blazing on Her golden fingers! It is as if Her beauty and sweetness comes gushing out of Her limbs! Śyāma is enchanted by Her lovely nectarean voice and can not hide Himself anymore. He approaches slowly and enters into the cave as if He is enchanted by some *mantra*. Seeing Śyāma, Svāminī at once stops singing, puts the Vīṇā away and quickly pulls Her veil over Her head. Gravely She says: "Śyāma! Are You here?" Śyāma says: "What song have You taught to Tulasī?" Svāminī: "What's that to You? Tulasi! Let us hear what song You have learned!" Tulasī takes the Vīṇā in her hand and begins to sing. How wonderful is the prowess of Tulasī, the object of Svāminī's affection! She has learned the song after one single hearing. It is as if the song takes shape before Their eyes. Śyāma does not hear a song - He relishes Svāminī's sweetness. Śyāma is enchanted and sits down next to Svāminī to listen. Tulasī asks: "Did I pass the examination?" Both praise Tulasī, saying: "Bravo, Tulasi! Well learnt!"[216] When this vision vanishes Śrī Raghunātha laments and prays:

he dayā-śile dhani, giriguha gṛhiṇī,
lajjā hetu sakhīgaṇa hoite.
saṅge kori ekākinī, loiyā yāibe tumi,
more girirāja kandarete.

"O merciful, fortunate Rādhe! O mistress of the mountain-caves! When will You shyly take only me away from among Your girlfriends and bring me to a cave of Govardhana Hill?"

śikṣā dibe divya gāna, rasa kori mūrtimān,
svara bheda kohoto yāhāra
tomāra śikṣāte āmi, rasagāne cūḍāmaṇi,
gāhibo ki yugala sabhāya.

"You will teach me divine songs there that crystallize Your *rasa* in different tunes. Because of Your teachings I will be able to sing the crownjewels of *rasik* songs in the assembly of the Yugala Kiśora!" (Śrī Haripada Śila)

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VERSE 90:

YĀCITĀ LALITAYĀ KILA DEVYĀ
LAJJAYĀ NATA-MUKHĪṀ GAṆATO MĀM
DEVI DIVYA RASA-KĀVYA KADAMBAṀ
PĀṬHAYIṢYASI KADĀ PRAṆAYENA

yācitā - begged; *lalitayā* - by Lalitā; *kila* - certainly; *devyā* - by the goddess; *lajjayā* - shyly; *nata* -lowered; *mukhīṁ* - face (fem.); *gaṇataḥ* - assembly; *mām* - me; *devi* - O goddess!; *divya* - beautiful; *rasa* - romantic; *kāvya* - poetry; *kadambaṁ* - abundance; *pāṭhayiṣyasi* - You will recite; *kadā* - when; *praṇayena* - with love.

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[216] Narrated by Śrī Ānanda Gopāla Gosvāmī.

O Devi, when will I shyly lower my head in the assembly as You are requested by Lalitā-devī to lovingly read some beautiful romantic poetry to me?

Explanations: In the previous verse Tulasī learned singing from Svāminī and in this verse she wants to learn *rasika* poetry from Her. Svāminī moulds Tulasī as She wants it. She will serve Her Priyatama through this maidservant and thus make Him happy, and at the same time She blesses Her maidservant with devotional service. *śrīśvarī śikṣitāśeṣa kalā kauśala śālinīm* (Vṛndāvana Mahimāmṛta) "The maidservants know innumerable arts through the training of their Śrīśvarī". They also relish the love of the *sakhīs*. The leader of all the *sakhīs*, Lalitā-devī, asks Rādhikā: "*Sakhi*! Read some divine *rasika* poetry to Tulasī! Train her just as You like!" So Svāminī teaches Tulasī some poetry that she can later, at a proper moment, expertly recite to the Yugala Kiśora, who are fond of good poetry. There are so many services for which poetry must be learnt! Śrī Yugala goes rambling in the forest (*vana vihāra līlā*). Not only does the maidservant soften Their pathway by strewing flowers, but she also immerses Śyama in a boundless ocean of bliss by singing self-made songs to Him about Svāminī's glories:

gāyāni te guṇa-gaṇāṁs tava vartma gamyaṁ puṣpāstarair mṛdulayāni sugandhayāni
sāli-tatiḥ pratipadaṁ sumano hi vṛṣṭiṁ svāminy ahaṁ prati diśaṁ tanavāni bāḍham

(Saṅkalpa Kalpadruma - 14)

"O Svāmini! When You are rambling in the forest I will glorify You with songs, I will make the path over which You walk soft and fragrant by scattering flowers and, together with Your girlfriends, I will shower flowers in all directions and at every step!" And then:

preṣṭha sva pāṇi kṛta kausuma hāra kāñcī keyūra kuṇḍala kirīṭa virājitāṅgīm
tāṁ bhūṣayāni punar ātma kavitva puṣpair āsvādayāni rasikāli tatīrimāni

(Saṅkalpa Kalpadruma - 15)

"While Your lover decorates You with handmade floral necklaces, sashes, armlets, earrings and crowns I will again adorn You with flower-like selfmade poems, and I will also make Your *rasika sakhīs* relish that poetry!" The *kiṅkarīs* know the desires on the minds of the Yugala Kiśora, and they serve Them accordingly by reading the appropriate *rasika* poetry to Them. Tulasī thinks: "How many maidservants don't You have! Why are You asking me this in particular?" She becomes shy and lowers her head when Svāminī calls her to learn beautiful and sweet poetry from Her. The more one experiences Svāminī's mercy the more one's *svarūpa* will awaken. "Unfortunately my *svarūpa* is sleeping, being lullabied by external affairs. Even if I could just spend the day thinking 'I am Śrī Rādhā's maidservant' it could be attained!"

How affectionately Svāminī calls: "Tulasi! Won't you read? From now on you should come every day for learning poetry from Me!" Svāminī has written these poems Herself and about Herself, because *divya rasa*, divine flavours, are nowhere else but in Her.[217] Śrī-Śrī Rādhā-Mādhava are the divine hero and heroine, and Their pastimes are called *divya rasa*. There is no poetry as *rasika* as this! The authors of the scriptures on transcendental *rasa* and *bhakti-rasa* consider the *rasa* which is aimed at in mundane poetry to be the products of

[217] Narrated by Śrī Ānanda Gopāla Gosvāmī.

materialistic minds and therefore consisting of the three modes of material nature, or *māyā*. Śrīmat Jīva Gosvāmī clearly writes in his Prīti Sandarbha (110): *kiṁ ca laukikasya raty ādeḥ sukha-rūpatvaṁ yathā kathañcid eva - vastu vicāre duḥkha paryavasāyitvāt....tasmāl laukikasyaiva vibhāvādeḥ rasa janakatvaṁ na śraddheyam.* "The happiness gotten from worldly *rati* (erotic love) is only slight and after due consideration ends in misery. The *rasa* that comes from worldly *vibhāvas* (excitements) is not to be cherished".

Svāminī uses the names of another hero and heroine in Her romantic poems and reads them to her maidservant Tulasī, knowing her to be Her closest confidante. She will not keep anything hidden in them and She feels very happy while revealing these secrets to Her maidservants![218] While Śrīmān Mahāprabhu danced before the cart of Lord Jagannātha, during the Ratha Yātrā at Puri, He sang the verse *yaḥ kaumāra haraḥ sa eva hi varaḥ* (He is my man, who took my maidenhood....) from the Kāvya Prakāśa about a mundane hero and heroine. (See C.C. Madhya 13 and Antya 1) No one else but Svarūpa Dāmodara could understand the transcendental meaning of *bhagavat-rasa* the Lord found in this verse. When Śrīmat Rūpa Gosvāmī heard this verse from the Lord's divine mouth, he understood the Lord's inner *bhāva* and revealed it by writing the verse *priya so'yaṁ Kṛṣṇaḥ* (He is My beloved Kṛṣṇa). When the Lord found this verse on a palmleaf on the roof of Haridāsa Ṭhākura's thatched cottage, He asked Śrī Rūpa:

mora ślokera abhiprāya nā jāne kon jane; mora manera kathā tumi jānile kemone
eto boli tā're bahu prasāda koriyā; svarūpa gosāire śloka dekhāilo loiyā
svarūpe puchena prabhu hoiyā vismita; mora manera kathā rūpa jānilo kemate?
svarūpa kohena - yā'te jānilo tomāra mana; tā'te jāni - hoy tomāra kṛpāra bhājana
prabhu kohe - tā're āmi santuṣṭa hoiyā; āliṅgana koilo sarva śakti saṅcāriyā
yogya-pātra hoy gūḍha rasa vivecane; tumi-o kohio tā're gūḍha rasākhyāne {C.C}

"No one could understand the meaning of My verse. How did you know the feelings on My mind?" Saying this, He bestowed great mercy upon Śrī Rūpa and showed the verse to Svarūpa Dāmodara. In amazement the Lord asked Svarūpa: "How did Rūpa know what was on My mind?" Svarūpa Dāmodara replied: "I know that only someone who has received Your grace, can know what is on Your mind!" The Lord said: "I am satisfied with him (Śrī Rūpa)." He embraced Śrī Rūpa and empowered him completely, saying: "He is qualified to understand the confidential *rasa*. Tell him everything about the glories of these confidential flavours!"

These Rūpa and Tulasī from Vraja are there (in Gaura-*līlā*) Rūpa and Raghunātha Dāsa. That is why Svāminī is so happy to reveal Her inner feelings to them. As the teacher is, so is the pupil. Tulasī learns these poems after a single hearing. How beautiful it is to learn this poetry from Her and to recite it! "I am Your maidservant, and You will mould me with Your own hands!" She's well-educated in the sciences that Śrīmatī has taught Her, and thus she will become expert in *rasika* services. The relish of devotional services that lead to the blissful meeting of Śrī-Śrī Rādhā-Mādhava is their very means of subsistence! In these duties the use of poetry is required. Virahinī Śrī Rādhā (Svāminī suffering separation from Kṛṣṇa). Tulasī then goes out to bring Kṛṣṇa and poetically describes Svāminī's sorrow to Him to urge Him to quickly come and meet Her: "Mādhava! Are You here? But there is Your Priyājī, separated from You!"

nindati candanam indu-kiraṇam anuvindati khedam adhīram
vyāla-nilaya milanena garalam iva kalayati malaya-samīram
sa virahe tava dīnā
mādhava manasija viśikha bhayād iva bhāvanayā tvayi līnā

[218] Narrated by Śrī Ānanda Gopāla Gosvāmī.

(Gīta Govindam)

"O Mādhava! Afflicted Rādhikā is as if merged in thoughts about You, being afraid of Cupid's arrows! The southern winds, that are cooler than sandalwoodpulp and moonbeams, appear to be as hot as snake-poison to Her! How much She's suffering, being separated from You!" Then Tulasī returns to Svāminī and encourages Her to go and meet Śyāma by reciting the following poem:

rati sukha sāre gatam abhisāre madana manohara veśam
na kuru nitambini gamana vilambam anusara taṁ hṛdayeśam
dhīra-samīre yamunā-tīre vasati vane vanamālī
pīna payodhara parisara mardana cañcala kara-yuga-śālī

(Gīta Govinda)

"O Nitambini (girl with nice buttocks)! Don't delay Your rendez-vous with the Lord of Your heart! Wear Your most enchanting dress, which is the essence of erotic joy! Vanamālī (Kṛṣṇa, who wears a garland of forest flowers) dwells in the forest on the bank of the Yamunā, where a gentle breeze blows! There He will massage Your big breasts with His restless hands!"

The *sakhīs* also teach songs to the maidservants, but the teachings of Svāminī are the greatest of all. We can experience that Svāminī accepts us through the merciful introduction of Śrī Gurudeva. "When will You make me learned in *rasika* poetry?"
Śrī Haripada Śila sings:

he devi he srī rādhe! tumi vraja maṇḍalete,
lalitā lālitā sabe gāya.
lalitāra prārthanāte, dāsī-gaṇa gaṇanāte,
aṅgīkāra koribe āmāya.

"O Devi Śrī Rādhe! Everyone in Vraja-maṇḍala says that You are fondly cherished by Lalitā, who accepts me as one of Your maidservants!"

lajjāya nata-mukhī āmi, more dekhi anāthinī,
kṛpā kori rākhi nija pāya.
kobe divya rasa kāvya, sumadhura bhaṅgī vākya,
praṇayete śikhābe āmāya?

"Please keep this helpless girl that I am by Your lotus feet, seeing that I lower my head out of shyness! When will You lovingly use sweet words to teach me divine *rasik* poetry?"

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VERSE 91:

NIJA KUṆḌATATĪ KUÑJE GUÑJAD BHRAMARA SAṄKULE
DEVI TVĀṀ KACCHAPĪ ŚIKṢĀṀ KADĀ MĀṀ KĀRAYIṢYASI

nija - own; *kuṇḍa* - lake; *taṭī* - on the shore; *kuñje* - in a grove; *guñjad* - buzzing; *bhramara* - bumblebees; *saṅkule* - groups; *devi* - goddess; *tvam* - You; *kacchapī* - a lute; *śikṣāṁ* - teaching; *kadā* - when; *māṁ* - me; *kārayiṣyasi* - You will do.

O Devi! When will You teach me how to play the Kacchapī (a kind of vīṇā) in a grove that is filled with humming bees, on the shore of Your lake?

Explanations: In this verse a vision is described of Svāminī teaching the Vīnā. "O devi! When will You teach me how to play the Vīṇā in a grove on the bank of Your *kuṇḍa*?" Just like *rasika* poetry Vīṇa-playing is also required while serving the Divine Couple. Tulasī thinks: "I want to become expert in anything connected with devotional service!" It is also Svāminī's desire: "Let My *kiṅkarī* become expert in her service!" "To the lotus feet of such a merciful mistress my Śrī Gurudeva has submitted me! He has shown me that the greatest thing in life is Svāminī's service and Svāminī's maidservanthood. How I am wasting my life if I am callous and indifferent towards the lotus feet of such a mistress, who personally teaches Her maidservants how to serve Her! Even now I could not recognize myself as Rādhā's *dāsī*, but I remain immersed in false, temporary bodily consciousness and its expansions. I could still not take Śrī Rādhā's lotus feet in my heart (or to my chest, to massage them)!" A practising devotee becomes ashamed when he realises his own unfortunate condition after hearing and chanting about the activities and the teachings of the *ācāryas* (Gosvāmīs). Śrīla Dāsa Gosvāmī, who became intoxicated by drinking the honey that trickles from Śrī Caitanya's lotus feet and thus gave up his wife, that was as beautiful as an angel, and his wealth, that equaled that of Indra, the king of heaven, as if they were stool, to become poorer than a beggar, wrote in his book 'Muktā Caritra (3)': *nijām ujjvalitāṁ bhakti-sudhām arpayitum kṣitau. uditaṁ śacīgarbha-vyomni pūrṇaṁ vidhuṁ bhaje* "I worship the full moon that rose in the sky of mother Śacī's womb to brighten up the world with the nectar of His own devotion." What kind of people of this age are we? Śrīman Mahāprabhu showed us the path of *bhajan*, of taste, of constant attraction, the path of natural possessiveness, experience of *rasa*, love and the pinnacle of bliss. This is not the path of fear, reverence or obstacles. Without experiencing transcendental *bhagavat-rasa* one naturally starts to engage in worldly activities and attachment and constant attraction to Kṛṣṇa will not arise. This natural experience of *rasa* is infused in the worship revealed by Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. Although the Vraja-*gopikās* naturally bathed in the powerful flood of attachment to Kṛṣṇa, all the obstacles on their way to meeting Him made their attachment to Him even more powerful and infused that natural love for Kṛṣṇa in them. And Śrīman Mahāprabhu has brought the worship in the mood of the *mañjarīs*, the maidservants who have taken shelter of the lotus feet of Śrī Rādhā, who is Herself the crownjewel of all these *gopikās*! All *rasa* and *bhāva* is assembled to the fullest extent and in all respects in the style of *bhajan* that Mahāprabhu has brought us. If I don't understand this now, then when will I?

In a *kuñja* filled with humming bees on the bank of Rādhākuṇḍa Tulasī learns playing Vīṇā from Svāminī. This lake Rādhākuṇḍa delights Tulasī so much because it belongs to her Svāminī. There are so many divine playgrounds in Vraja, but Raghunātha has chosen the bank of Svāminī's *kuṇḍa* as his greatest (and only) shelter. In a *kuñja* filled with humming bees on this bank he will learn to play Vīṇā so that he will be able to render devotional service to the Divine Couple. *ārabdha rāsa rabhasām hariṇā saha tvāṁ tat pāṭhitaiva vidūṣī kalayāni vīṇām* (Saṅkalpa Kalpadruma 16) "When You commence the Rāsa-dance with Hari I will play the Vīṇā according to Your teachings, so that I can arouse Your Rāsa-desires!" In Madana Sukhadā-*kuñja* Svāminī sits down and takes a Vīṇā in Her hand, showing Tulasī how to hold it and how

to play the strings with the fingers of her left hand. Tulasī attentively watches Svāminī while sitting at Her feet. Meanwhile a parrot tells Śyāmasundara: "Śrīśvarī is teaching Tulasī how to play the Kacchapī-Vīṇā at Madana Sukhada *kuñja*!", so Śyāma goes there and sees how Svāminī is absorbed in twanging the strings of the Vīṇā, while bees are sweetly buzzing around. Śyāma is enchanted by this sight as He stands by the gate of the *kuñja.* Svāminī suddenly sees Him standing there and stops playing the Vīṇā. Śyāma says: "Can't I see even a little of how You are teaching Tulasī how to play the Vīṇā?", so Svāminī orders Tulasī to play. Śrīmatī is very happy to see Śyāma and to please Him through Her maidservants. One of the 108 names Śrīpāda Dāsa Gosvāmī gives to Śrīmatī is: *svagaṇopendra pādābja sparśa lambhana harṣiṇī:* "She who is very happy, with Her friends, to touch Upendra's lotus feet". But when She attains Kṛṣṇa's lotus feet with Her *kiṅkarīs* Her joy is even more spontaneous! How happy Svāminī is to serve Śyāma through Her maidservants! On Svāminī's order Tulasī plays the Vīṇā and sings a wonderful lovesong with it. It is as if the spiritual flavour of the subject is crystallized by the song! Hearing this song, both Śyāma and Svāminī become inspired to make love, so Tulasī discretely leaves the *kuñja*. Blessed is this maidservant! She can make the Loving Couple float in an ocean of *rasa* and then peek through the vines to relish these sweet erotic pastimes in Madana Sukhadā-kuñja![223]

tanu tanu milane upajala prema; marakata yaichana beḍalo hema
kanaka latāya janu taruṇa tamāla; nava jaladhare janu vijuri rasāla
kamale madhupa yeno pāola saṅga; duhu tanu pulakita prema taraṅga
duhu adharāmṛta duhu koru pāna; govinda dāsa duhuka guṇa gāna

"Prema arises in Their bodies when They meet. They look like an emerald embraced by gold, a young Tamāla-tree embraced by a golden vine or a luscious lightning-strike entering a fresh monsooncloud. They resemble a honeybee meeting the lotus flower. Their bodies are studded with goosepimples as They ride on billows of love and They drink the nectar of Each other's lips while Govinda dāsa sings Their glories."

Tulasī eagerly looks through the latticed window and sees Rādhikā as a golden lightning strike and Śyāma as a darkblue raincloud, showering transcendental *rasika* pastimes. Fortunate Tulasī fills up her heart with this sweet vision like a thirsty Cātakī-bird that is solely dependent on water from the Kṛṣṇa-raincloud. Suddenly the vision ends and Śrī Raghunātha rolls on the bank of Rādhākuṇḍa, weeping and moistening the bank of the *kuṇḍa* with his tears. With a voice choked up by tears he laments -

he devi he īśvari, vṛṣabhānu sukumāri,
pāda-padme kori nivedana
nija kuṇḍa taṭa kuñje, yathā alikula guñje,
phule phule māti sarva kṣaṇa.

sei kuñja taṭa sthita, kuñja madhye vicitrita,
mandirete bosi nirajane.
vīṇā yantra kacchapī nāma, dhariyā tāhāra tāna,
śikṣā dibe more koto dine

(Śrī Haripada Śila)

"O Devi! O Īśvari! O Vṛṣabhānu Mahārāja's tender daughter! I pray to Your lotus feet! When will You teach me to play the Kacchapī-vīnā, sitting in a lonely temple in a wonderful

[223] Narrated by Śrī Ānanda Gopāla Gosvāmī.

kuñja on the bank of Your pond, where the bees are always buzzing from flower to flower in an intoxicated state?"

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VERSE 92:

VIHĀRAIS TRUṬITAṀ HĀRAṀ GUMPHITAṀ DAYITAṀ KADĀ SAKHĪNĀṀ LAJJAYĀ DEVI SAṀJÑAYĀ MĀṀ NIDEKṢYASI

vihāraiḥ - by pastimes; *truṭitam* - broken; *hāraṁ* - necklace; *gumphitaṁ* - strung; *dayitaṁ* - dear; *kadā* - when; *sakhīnāṁ* - of the friends; *lajjayā* - out of shyness; *devi* - goddess; *saṁjñayā* - by a hint; *māṁ* - me; *nidekṣyasi* - You will engage.

O Devi! When will You, being shy before Your girlfriends, order me through a hint to restring Your dear necklace which broke during Your loving pastimes with Kṛṣṇa?

Explanations: Śrī Raghunātha is deeply absorbed in his *svarūpa;* there's no end to the stream of his visions. One by one the transcendental pastimes trickle through his consciousness. In the previous verse Tulasī rendered a wonderful service by playing the Vīṇā. After arousing amorous feelings in the Divine Couple she went out of the *kuñja* and became blessed by relishing the sweetness of Their pastimes by looking in through the window. After the Divine Couple has completed Their amorous pastimes Tulasī understands that her time to render service has come, so she enters into the *kuñja*. Both Rādhā and Śyāma are leaning against Each other in the *kuñja* after completing Their amorous pastimes. *śṛṅgāra rasa* (erotic love) personified has become an expert craftsman and has dressed Them singlehandedly. Their clothes are dishevelled, Rādhikā's blouse has fallen off, *sindūra* is smeared over Their foreheads, Svāminī's braid is half opened and Her pearl necklace is broken.[219] Śyāmasundara is the very form of *śṛṅgāra rasa* (erotic flavour), and even He is enchanted by the vision of Śrī Rādhikā's body after Their love pastimes: *līlā ante sukhe ihāra ye aṅga mādhurī; tāhā dekhi sukhe āmi āpanā pāsarī* (C.C. Ādi 4) "I get beside Myself of ecstasy when I behold the sweetness of Her body after Our Pastimes." Even now this relish has not come to an end. Svāminī gives a hint to Tulasī: "Tulasi! My pearl necklace is broken! Quickly restring it!" *vihārais truṭitam hāraṁ*: "The necklace was not broken by Me, but by Our pastimes", Svāminī shyly says. "Lalitā and Viśākhā will come here soon! Quickly restring the necklace before they have another reason to mock Me!"[220] The *sakhīs* make waves on the ocean of *prema* by making jokes. *prema līlā vihārānāṁ samyag vistārikā sakhī* (Ujjvala Nīlamaṇi) "The *sakhīs* completely expand and nourish the love, the pastimes and the enjoyment of Śrī-Śrī-Rādhā-Mādhava." *sakhī vinā ei līlāra puṣṭi nāhi hoy; sakhī līlā vistāriyā sakhī āsvādoy* (C.C.) "Without the *sakhīs* these pastimes cannot be nourished. The *sakhīs* extend them and make them relishable." But only the *mañjarīs* are eligible to render service freely and without hesitation! It is the nature of Mahābhāva to make Śyāmasundara happy and it is the nature of the *mañjarīs* to make both

[219] Narrated by Śrī Ānanda Gopāla Gosvāmī.

[220] Narrated by Śrī Ānanda Gopāla Gosvāmī.

Rādhā and Śyāmasundara happy with their services. Along with their services they can also relish the sweetness of the Yugala-pastimes. According to all the scriptures Kṛṣṇa is the most beautiful, but according to Śrīmad Bhāgavata His beauty is even more enchanting when He is with the *gopīs.* Śrī Śuka Muni said (Ś.B. 10.33.7):

tatrāti śuśubhe tābhir bhagavān devakī sutaḥ
madhye maṇīnām haimānāṁ mahā marakato yathā

"Kṛṣṇa looked even more beautiful amongst the *gopīs*, like a great emerald (Kṛṣṇa) beautified by beads of gold (the *gopīs*)". And Rādhārāṇī is the most beautiful *gopī*! Where can you ever find anyone like Her? In Śrī Viśākhānandada-stotram Śrī Raghunātha dāsa has written:

govindānaṅga rājīve bhānu śrīr vārṣabhānavī;
Kṛṣṇa hṛt kumudollāse sudhākara kara sthitiḥ

"Śrī Rādhikā, the daughter of Vṛṣabhānu, is the beautiful sun that shines on the lotus flower of Govinda's amorous desires and She's like the moon that shines on the heart of Kṛṣṇa, that is like a Kumuda-flower (Kumuda flowers thrive on the moonlight)."

Kṛṣṇa mānasa haṁsasya mānasi sarasī varā;
Kṛṣṇa cātaka jīvātu navāmbhoda payaḥ śruti

"She is the excellent Mānasī-lake where the swan of Kṛṣṇa's mind swims (swans go to this lake once a year to mate) and She is the fresh monsoon cloud that keeps the Kṛṣṇa-Cātaka bird alive."

Kṛṣṇa mañjula tāpiñche vilasat svarṇa yūthikā
govinda navya pāthode sthira vidyul latādbhuta

"She is a splendid golden Yūthikā-flower on the beautiful Tamāla-tree named Kṛṣṇa, and She is a wonderful steady lightning strike in the fresh raincloud named Kṛṣṇa."

grīṣme govinda sarvāṅge candra candana candrikā;
śīte śyāma śubhāṅgeṣu pīta paṭṭa lasat paṭī

“In the summer She is soothing camphor, sandalpaste and moonlight for all of Govinda's limbs and in the winter She is a glistening yellow silk garment on Śyāma's handsome limbs."

madhau Kṛṣṇa tarūllāse madhu-śrīr madhurākṛtiḥ
mañju mallāra rāga-śrīḥ prāvṛṣi śyāma harṣiṇī

“In the spring She is the sweet form of the vernal goddess of fortune that gladdens the Kṛṣṇa-tree, and in the rainy season She is the lovely Mallāra-melody that delights Śyāma."

ṛtau śāradi rāsaika rasikendram iha sphuṭam
varītuṁ hanta rāsa-śrīr viharanti sakhī śritā

“In the autumn She selects Rāsaika Rasikendra (Kṛṣṇa, the only king of relishers of the Rāsa-dance) as Her husband and enjoys the Rāsa-dance with Him as Rāsa-Śrī, the goddess of beauty of the Rāsa-dance, accompanied by Her friends."

hemante smara yuddhārtham aṭantam rāja-nandanam
pauruṣena parājetuṁ jaya-śrīr mūrti dhāriṇī

"In the Hemanta-season She wanders around with prince Kṛṣṇa to fight erotic battles, in which She assumes the form of Jaya-Śrī (the goddess of victory) and defeats Him in a masculine way (taking the masculine role during lovemaking)." Whatever is beautiful, sweet, loveable, dear to the heart and desirable Śrī Raghunātha has used as examples of Śrī-Śrī Rādhā-Mādhava's extraordinary mutual love and Their beauty and sweetness. The greatest remembrance is the pastimes of the Divine Couple and the practising devotee should immerse himself in this *rasa. yugala vilāsa smṛti sāra* (Narottama). During particular pastimes the Yugala will feel shy when the *sakhīs* are present, therefore even the *sakhīs* will sometimes order the *mañjarīs* to perform the more confidential service. Śrīla Narottama Dāsa Ṭhākura sings:

lalitā kobe more, vījana deobo, vījabo māruta mande
śramajala sakala, meṭabo duhuṅ kalevara, herabo parama ānande

When will Lalitā order me to softly fan Them when Their bodies are studded with sweatdrops of fatigue? I will see Them in topmost bliss!" (Prārthanā)

The maidservant's heart is filled with Śrī Rādhikā's love and affection. She sits at Her feet and quickly restrings the necklace. Svāminī is most satisfied and says: "Well done! How did you do that so quickly?" There is no limit to Tulasī's bliss when she knows that Svāminī is pleased with her. Now she knows that her service is a success! If I don't get a signal (from my deity) about whether my service is pleasing Him or not, can I then truly say that I'm doing *bhajan*? In my dreams, *smaraṇa* and visions I want some experience also". This is a consolation in the life of a practising devotee. How wonderful is Śrī Raghunātha's relish of these visions! It is as if he directly experiences all this! When the vision vanishes he weeps and prays:

he devi śrī rādhike! he svāmini gāndharvike!
nikuñjete kandarpa vilāse
premāspada maṇihāra, chinna hole punarbār,
sakhīgaṇa bhoye lajjāvaśe.

sakhīgaṇa samīpete, ājñā dibe iṅgitete,
chinna hāra granthanā korite.
vimardita kaṇṭha hāra, ki apūrva śobhā tāra,
gaṅthi dibo rasa kautukete

(Śrī Haripada Śila)

"O Devi Śrī Rādhike! O Svāmini Gāndharvike! When Your beloved jewelled necklace breaks during Your erotic pastimes in the *nikuñja* You are too shy to show it to Your girlfriends, so You order me through a hint to restring it. How wonderful is the beauty of that ravaged necklace! I will restring it with *rasika* eagerness!"

.

VERSE 93:

SVA MUKHĀN MAN MUKHE DEVI KADĀ TĀMBŪLA CARVITAM
SNEHĀT SARVA DIŚO VĪKṢYA SAMAYE TVAṀ PRADASYASI

sva - own; *mukhāt* - from the mouth; *mad* - my; *mukhe* - in the mouth; *devi* - goddess; *kadā* - when; *tāmbūla* - betelnuts; *carvitam* - chewed; *snehāt* - out of affection; *sarva* - all; *diśa* - directions; *vīkṣya* - looking; *samaye* - in time; *tvaṁ* - You; *pradāsyasi* - will give.

O Devi! When will You affectionately give me the remnants of Your chewed betel from Your mouth into mine, looking all around (to check if anybody sees it)?

Explanations: Both during visions and after their disappearance Śrī Raghunātha's heart remains filled with an unbroken desire to attain the nectarean service of Śrī Rādhā. Practising Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava-devotees should do *bhajan* while keeping this aspiration alive. The desires on a person's mind will ultimate come out in the form of acts in the field of action in the same form and nature as it was cherished by the mind. Similarly, the picture of the transcendental desires that a practising devotee has on his mind will be drawn on the slate of his heart by Yogamāyā. So also with those aspiring for Śrī Rādhā's service. Śrīpāda Sanātana Gosvāmī writes in Bṛhad Bhāgavatāmṛta (2.1.21):

ye sarva nairapekṣyena rādhā dāsyecchavaḥ param
saṅkīrtayanti tan nāma tādṛśa priyatāmayāḥ

"Those who give up all other spiritual practices and goals and desire only the supreme goal of Śrī Rādhā's service, always chant Her name in *saṅkīrtana* and automatically attain their desired perfection." Those who simply think: "I am Rādhā's maidservant" and consider this attainment to be the perfection of everything will automatically attain a result which is beyond fancy. The practice needed to attain that extraordinary result is the loving congregational chanting of the holy name of Rāsa Rasika (Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the relisher of the Rāsa-dance). *nāma-saṅkīrtana* is the best means to attain this perfection, for it's full of flavour and full of bliss. Even in the material world it is seen that when one discusses the qualities of a certain great person, that person may be pleased, but he will not respond. But when one calls him by name, whether it is in praise or in blasphemy, he will immediately respond, even though he may be far away. The best way to attain Śrīman Mahāprabhu's greatest gift of *rādhā dāsya* is the sweet practice of *nāma saṅkīrtana. harṣe prabhu kohen - śuno svarūpa rāma rāya; nāma saṅkīrtana - kalau parama upāya* (C.C.) "Joyfully the Lord said: "Listen, O Svarūpa and Rāmānanda Rāya! In the age of Kali *nāma saṅkīrtana* is the best way to salvation!"

Svāminī thinks to Herself: "Tulasī is doing nice service! I must reward her! But what if Lalitā and My other girlfriends would see it? I would die of shame!" So She looks in all four directions before She pushes Her chewed betelnuts from Her mouth into Tulasī's mouth in an unseen way, while Tulasī hangs the necklace back on Her neck. In this way She gives Her dear Tulasī a just reward for her loving service. It is the same betelleaf that Śyāmasundara pushed into Her mouth while He enjoyed with Her and Svāminī knows how much Tulasī cherishes that: *Kṛṣṇa ye khāy tāmbūla, kohe tāra nāhi mūla, tāhe āra dambha paripāṭī. tāra yebā udgāra, tāre koy amṛta sāra, gopīra mukha kore ālabāṭī* (C.C.Antya 16) "I cannot describe the value and the complete pride of the betelleaves Kṛṣṇa eats. Whatever He spits out is called the essence of nectar and He uses the *gopīs*' mouths as spittoons." In these betel leaves lie the savour of Their lip-nectar. *parama durlabha ei kṛṣṇādharāmṛta; tāhā yei pāy, tāra saphala jīvita* (C.C.) "This lip-nectar of Kṛṣṇa is most precious, and the life of anyone who obtains it is successful." Where can this lip-nectar be relished to the utmost? Love is required for

experiencing the sweetness of Kṛṣṇa's sounds, touch and flavours. Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī says: *Kṛṣṇa mādhuryasya premaikāsvādyatvām*: "Kṛṣṇa's sweetness is only relishable through pure love." But not everyone tastes it in the same way: *āmāra mādhurya nitya nava nava hoy; sva sva prema anurūpa bhakta āsvādoy* (C.C.): "My sweetness is ever-fresh and each devotee relishes it according to (the amount of) his own love." Śrī Viśvanātha Cakravartī writes in his commentary on this verse: *ayaṁ bhāvaḥ nahi vastu sad bhāva eva tad grahaṇe kāraṇam kintu tatra indriyānāṁ śaktih. sā ca kāryaika samadhigamyā yathākāryaṁ kalpyate. ataḥ yasya yāvād indriya śaktiḥ sa tāvad eva vastu grhnāti na tu sarve samānam indriya śakter asamatvād iti yathā tathaiva pratyakṣībhūtasya man mādhuryasya sad bhāvo na tad āsvādane kāraṇaṁ kintu premaiva, tat tu man mādhuryādyanubhava kāryaika gamyaṁ yathākāryaṁ kalpyate. ataḥ yasya yāvān premā sa tāvān man mādhuryam āsvādayati na tu sarve samānam. tathā sati man mādhurya samagrāsvādana kārya samadhigamya samagrena premnā ekā śrī rādhikā man mādhuryaṁ samagram āsvādayati anye tu na tadvad āsvādayituṁ śaknuvanti tadvat premābhāvāt.* "It is not the presence of some object that makes it relishable, but the power that the senses may have for taking it. We can also judge whether there is power in the senses to take the object when we see them taking them. In the same way we cannot say that everyone will be able to take (appreciate or relish) the sweetness of the Lord, although it may be right before their eyes (in the form of the deity or a picture). Only love is the cause for relishing the Lord's sweetness, without love nothing of the Lord's sweetness can be relished. And again, this sweetness can be relished according to the amount of love we feel for the Lord. We can know whether a person loves God or not, and how much he loves God, according to the amount that that person relishes the Lord's sweetness. Śrī Rādhikā's love is unlimited, and therefore only She can relish Kṛṣṇa's sweetness to the utmost. No one else but She has unlimited love, and therefore no one else but She can relish Kṛṣṇa's endless sweetness to the utmost". Śrī Rādhikā's love is unlimited, so She is able to fully taste His unlimited sweetness, and the sweetness of His chewed betelleaves. *ei prema dvāre nitya rādhikā ekāli; āmāra mādhuryāmṛta āsvāde sakali* (C.C): "Through this love only Rādhikā is able to relish all of My nectarean sweetness".

Svāminī thinks: "If I must reward Tulasī, then I should give her this most tasty delicacy!" But Tulasī, being partial to Svāminī, will not even relish it when it is chewed only by Kṛṣṇa. It must be chewed by Śrī Rādhikā especially! She is ever begging for Svāminīṭ's lip-nectar. Just as Śrī Rādhikā does not accept any eatable which is not first enjoyed by Kṛṣṇa, so the *mañjarīs* do not accept anything which is not first tasted by Śrī Rādhikā; hence the lip-nectar of the Yugala is ever-coveted by the maidservants. Svāminī, who is affectionate to Her millions of maidservants, revives Tulasī with the nectar of Her lotus feet and the nectar from Her lips. Not only that, but She grants it to Tulasī by embracing her, kissing her and transferring Kṛṣṇa's chewed betelleaves from Her mouth into Tulasī's mouth after looking in all four directions to see if nobody will notice it. Tulasī feels blessed by getting this reward.[221] Then the transcendental revelation disappears. Tulasī opens her mouth, but she doesn't get the chewed betel-leaves, so she cries with tearfilled throat:

he rādhe vinodini, kuñja cakravartini,
Kṛṣṇa-priyā āmāra īśvarī
doṅhe tāmbūla bhakṣaṇe, samara keli avasāne,
cāri dike dṛṣṭi-pāta kori

nija mukha hoite tumi, āmāra mukhete dhani,
carvita tāmbūla kobe dibe
snehe vigalita mana, bhāvi more nija jana,

[221] Narrated by Śrī Ānanda Gopāla Gosvāmī. Śrī Baṅgabihārī Vidyālaṅkāra adds: *samaye dantadhāvan bhojana* "Sometimes Tulasī may get the chewed betelleaves before Svāminī brushes Her teeth after taking Her meals."

sneha kṛpā koro koto bhāve

(Śrī Haripada Śila)

"O Rādhe! Vinodini! O empress of the *kuñja*! O beloved of Kṛṣṇa! O My Īśvari! After Your erotic battle You both chew betelleaves and after chewing it, You look in all four directions before You push it from Your own mouth into mine. O Fortunate girl! Please be merciful to me in so many ways! Affectionately consider me to be Yours, Your mind melting of affection!"

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VERSE 94:

NIVIḌA MADANA YUDDHE PRĀṆANĀTHENA SĀRDHAṀ
DAṾITA MADHURA KĀÑCĪ YĀ MADĀD VISMṚTĀSĪT
ŚAŚIMUKHI SAMAYE TVAṀ HANTA SAMBHĀLYA BHAṄGYĀ
TVARITAM IHA TAD ARTHAṀ KIṀ TVAYĀHAṀ PRAHEYĀ

niviḍa - intense; *madana* - erotic; *yuddhe* - fight; *prāṇa-nāthena sārdhaṁ* - with the lord of Your heart; *dayita* - dear; *madhura* - sweet; *kāñcī* - sash of bells; *yā* - who; *madād* - out of intoxication; *vismṛta* - forgotten; *āsīt* - was; *śaśimukhi* - O moonfaced girl!; *samaye* - in time; *tvam* - You; *hanta* - alas!; *sambhālya* - describing; *bhaṅgyā* - with a hint; *tvaritam* - quickly; *iha* - here; *tad* - that; *arthaṁ* - for the sake; *kiṁ* - what; *tvayā* - by You; *ahaṁ* - I; *praheyā* - engaged.

O Śaśimukhi (moonfaced girl)! During intense love-pastimes with the Lord of Your heart You become bewildered, so You forget Your dear sweet sash of bells there. When will You give me a wink to go quickly back and fetch it?

Explanations: In his *svarūpāveśa* Śrī Raghunātha renders loving service and accordingly relishes Svāminī's affection and mercy. Both during visions and after them Rādhārāṇī firmly sits on the path of his remembrance. In Śrīmad Bhāgavata in the verses 3.29.11-12, starting with *mad guṇa śruti mātrena,* Kapiladeva defines transcendental devotion to God as an unbroken stream of thoughts about God. Śrīpāda Rāmānujācārya has written: *dhruvānusmṛtir eva bhakti śabdenābhidhīyate. upāsanā paryāyatvād bhakti śabdasya taila-dhārāvat niravichinna smṛti-pravāha rūpa dhruvānusmṛti dhyānaḥ* "Constant remembrance of God is known by the term *bhakti,* and uninterrupted remembrance of Him, like a unbroken stream of oil, in the course of worship, is called *dhyāna*". According to Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava-*ācāryas* like Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī and Śrī Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa *bhakti* means attachment or constant attraction to God. The meditation on God that proceeds without interruption, like a constant stream of oil, is colored by the favourable desire of the Lord's eternal associates to please Him and will appear in the senses and the minds of the practising devotees by the Lord's special grace. It becomes identical with the drop of love that dwells in the hearts of the living entities and will attain a form of love according to the mood of the different associates of the Lord.

When *sādhana bhakti* ripens into *bhāva bhakti* the absorption of the consciousness in *bhāva* turns into *dhruvānusmṛti*. This *dhruvānusmṛti* or *rati* can be gradually attained by a *sādhaka* by hearing, chanting and remembering the great loving devotion of the Lord's eternal associates. For this reason this Vilāpa Kusumāñjali is especially relishable for practitioners of Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavism. The best means to attain constant remembrance and love of Rādhārāṇī (*dhruvānusmṛti*) is to hear, chant, and remember this.

In *svarūpāveśa* Śrī Raghunātha dāsa prays: "Ayi Śaśimukhi! O moonfaced girl! After You finished Your intense amorous battle with the Lord of Your life You dropped Your beloved waistbells and when You came out of the *kuñja* You realised: "I don't have them on anymore!" Will You send me back to the *kuñja* with a hint to get them for You?" Why are these waistbells so dear to Svāminī? Because they make Śyāmasundara very happy.[222] Whatever makes Śyāmasundara happy is very dear to Śrī Rādhārāṇī. She doesn't care about these things for Her own sake.

gopikā jānena kṛṣṇera manera vāñchita; prema-sevā paripāṭi iṣṭa samīhita
sei gopīgaṇa madhye uttamā - rādhikā; rūpe guṇe saubhāgye preme sarvādhikā

"The *gopikās* know the desires on Kṛṣṇa's mind and they render their service expertly for the happiness of their beloved. Amongst the *gopīs* Rādhikā is the greatest. Her beauty, qualities, fortune and love are all supreme." (Caitanya Caritāmṛta Ādi 4, 212, 214)

Svāminī needs the waistbells to increase Śyāma's bliss at the time of dancing and to increase His erotic madness at the time of Their amorous skirmishes. That's why these sweet waistbells are so dear to Svāminī! Amorous pastimes have been performed long ago and the Yugala Kiśora are now sitting on a jewelled throne, surrounded by Their *sakhīs*. For Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa's pleasure the *sakhīs* begin to dance and sing sweetly before Their throne, playing so many musical instruments keeping their musical time.[223] Sometimes they also play just instrumental music without singing.

madhura mādala rasāla; madhura madhura karatāla
madhura naṭana gati-bhaṅga; madhura madhura rasa-raṅga
madhura madhura rasa-gāna; kavi vidyāpati bhāna

"How sweetly and lusciously the drums play! How sweetly the cymbals chime in time! How sweet are their gestures and their dancing-steps! How sweetly they enjoy *rasika* pastimes! The poet Vidyāpati sings: How sweetly they sing their *rasika* songs!" Now the *sakhīs* encourage Śrī Rādhikā to get up and join them, while Śyāmasundara remains seated and plays His flute.

raṭati ravāba mahati kapināsa; rādhā ramaṇa koru murali vilāsa
rahi rahi rāga racaye rasavanta; ratirata rāgiṇī ramaṇa vasanta

"The playful *gopīs* compose *rasika rāgas* and the spring becomes the husband of the *rāginī* (female musical mode) which is attached to Rati (the wife of Cupid). Different kinds of *vīṇās* and stringed instruments like the Ravāva and Mahati are played while Rādhā Ramaṇa plays His Muralī-flute." While dancing Svāminī notices that She doesn't have Her sash on anymore, because She doesn't hear its bells jingling anymore. She then remembers that She left it behind in the *kuñja*, forgetting to put it on again out of loving ecstasy, and with Her eyes She gives a hint to Tulasī to fetch it. Tulasī goes back to the *kuñja* where Svāminī left the sash of bells behind and she sees it lying there, keeping quiet out of pride, feeling offended because

[222] Narration by Śrī Ānanda Gopāla Gosvāmī
[223] Narration by Śrī Ānanda Gopāla Gosvāmī.

it was abandoned. Those who belong to Rādhārāṇī have such an intense feeling of possessiveness. Tulasī loves everything that belongs to Svāminī and she tells the belt: "You are mine! How can I tolerate it when you reject me?" Then Tulasī soothes the chain's pique by saying : "O rey! Svāminī has forgotten you because She was intoxicated by an intense erotic battle! You are so dear to Her, do you think that She abandoned you on purpose?" Tulasī affectionately holds the waistbells to her chest and kisses them, thus soothing their pique and making them sweetly jingle again. Then she secretly brings it into the assembly of dancing *sakhīs* that surround Rādhikā and Śyāma. Svāminī is called Śaśimukhi here, She whose face resembles the moon with spots on his surface. When Tulasī returns to the assembly she sees that Svāminī's face is grey out of sorrow over Her waistbells.[224] Therefore Śrī Raghunātha addresses Svāminī here as Śaśimukhi, She whose face resembles a stained moon. Svāminī cannot stop dancing, and at the same time none of the *sakhīs* should notice that Tulasī is putting the belt back on Her waist. Everyone's gaze is fixed at Rādhikā. What to do now? The practising devotees should remember the expertise in service of the *nitya siddha kiṅkarīs* very well. While Śrīmatī dances Her veil falls off, so the *kiṅkarī* goes up to Her to pull Her veil straight and at the same time puts the waistbells back on Her waist in an unseen way. Now Svāminī's sweet dancing is once more accompanied by the jingling of Her waistbells! How happy Svāminī is! Tulasī's bliss knows no bounds, knowing her service was a success. Suddenly the vision ends and Śrī Raghunātha prays:

niviḍa madana yuddhe, nija prāṇanātha sāthe,
dayita madhura kāñcī dāma.
premadarpe vilāsinī, vismṛta hoiyā tumi,
anveṣaṇe nā peye sandhāna.

"O Vilāsini who is proud of Her love! When You forget Your sweet, beloved belt after having an intense erotic fight with the Lord of Your life You look for it, but You can't find it!"

he śrī rādhe bhaṅgī ko're, sei kāñcī khujibāre,
pāṭhābe ki āmāke tvarāya?
he devi śaśimukhi, tomāke koribo sukhī,
ādeśa pālane sarvadāya

(Śrī Haripada Śila)

"O Śrī Rādhe! Will You give me a hint to look for it and quickly bring it back to You? O moon-faced goddess! Just to make You happy I will always follow Your orders!"

.

VERSE 95:

KENĀPI DOṢA LAVA-MĀTRA LAVENA DEVI
SANTĀḌYAMĀṆA IHA DHĪRAMATE TVAYOCCAIḤ
ROṢENA TAL LALITAYĀ KILA NĪYAMĀNAḤ
SAṀDRAKṢYATE KIM U MANĀK SADAYAṀ JANO'YAM

[224] Explanation by Śrī Ānanda Gopāla Gosvāmī.

kena - by who; *api* - even; *doṣa* - fault; *lava* - slightly; *mātra* - only; *lavena* - by a small fraction; *devi* - goddess!; *santāḍyamāna* - being rebuked; *iha* - here; *dhīramate* - O calm girl; *tvayā* - by You; *uccaiḥ* - severely; *roṣeṇa* - with anger; *tad* - that; *lalitayā* - by Lalitā; *kila* - surely; *nīyamānaḥ* - being taken; *saṁdrakṣyate* - being seen; *kim u* - whether; *manāk* - slightly; *sa* - with; *dayaṁ* - mercy; *janaḥ* - person; *ayam* - this.

O Devi! Although You are generally very grave, You once severely rebuke me and send me away for committing just the tiniest mistake. When will You cast a slight glance on this pitiful person after Lalitā brought her back to You?

Explanations: In the previous verse Śrī Raghunātha dāsa had gotten Śrī Rādhā's mercy by bringing Her sash of bells back from the *vilāsa kuñja* where She left it, and in this verse He desires to get another indescribable kind of mercy. The practising devotee should endeavour to experience at least a little of Śrī Rādhā's mercy in his *smaraṇa*. It is a sign of expertise in *bhajan*, called *sākṣāt bhajana pravṛtti* (direct engagement in worship) if one manages to experience the form and attributes of one's memorable deity. Devotional practices like *smaraṇa* are definitely depending on God's mercy, but still the practising devotee must firmly endeavour to fix his mind. The Lord distributes His mercy to the practising devotees according to their endeavour and perseverance in *bhajan*. The Lord is naturally merciful to His devotees, but without being eager to do *bhajan* one will not be qualified to catch, keep or experience His grace. On the other hand, if one does not get the Lord's grace, despite making a lot of endeavour, then He will also not be attained. Śrīmat Vallabhācārya has said (Subodhinī-commentary of Śrīmad Bhāgavata):

na hi sādhana-sampattyā hariḥ tuṣyati karmavat
bhaktānāṁ dainyam evaikaṁ hari toṣana sādhanam

"Hari is not satisfied with a mere abundance of *sādhana*, as if the quantity counts, like some result-oriented activity. Hari is only pleased with the humility of the devotees." Śrī Rādhārāṇī is the very form of compassion and Her maidservants are blessed by being showered by Her grace in so many ways. A stream of revelations rains down on Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī.

When Tulasī brought Svāminī's sash of bells from the *kuñja* Lalitā noticed it and asked her with a wink: "Where have you been?" Tulasī winks back at her; "I'll tell you later!" Then, when Tulasī put the sash of bells back on Svāminī's waist, Lalitā was the only one who noticed it. After the dancing all the *sakhīs* are absorbed in giggling and joking, so Svāminī understands that Lalitā has noticed the belt-affair. Although Svāmini is generally very grave now She calls Tulasī into Her *kuñja* and severely rebukes her there.[225] *tāḍana bhartsana hoy kṛpāra lakṣaṇa*: "Chastisement is a sign of mercy". Without having a feeling of complete mineness towards somebody you won't chastise that person. Śrī Advaita Prabhu, desperate to get Śrīman Mahāprabhu's merciful punishment, finally began to preach that *jñāna* (intellectual spiritual realisation) is greater than *bhakti* (devotion):

[225] Narrated by Śrīla Ānanda Gopāla Gosvāmī.

bhakti bujhāite se prabhura avatāra;
heno bhakti na mānibo - ei mantra sāra
bhakti na mānile, krodhe āpani pāsari
prabhu mora śāsti koribeka cule dhari

"The Lord descended to preach devotion. Let Me deny that devotion, then the Lord will go out of His mind of anger and pull Me at the hair to punish Me!" (Caitanya Bhāgavata) After Śrīman Mahāprabhu had gone to Śāntipura with Nitāi Cāṅd to give Śrī Advaitācārya His merciful punishment the *ācārya* began to dance in ecstasy and said:

yeno aparādha koinu teno śāsti pāinu;
bhālo-i korilā prabhu! alpe eḍāinu
ekhone se ṭhākurāla bujhinu tomāra;
doṣa anurūpa śāsti korilā āmāra
ihāte se prabhu! bhṛtye citte bolo pāya;
boliyā ānande nāce śāntipura rāya

"I've been punished according to My offense. Well done, My Lord! You've given Me only a slight punishment! Now I have understood Your authority; You have punished Me according to My offense. Now I understand that You consider Me to be Your servant!" Saying this, the Lord of Śāntipura danced in ecstasy."

Therefore Śrīla Dāsa Gosvāmī, in his *svarūpāveśa,* says: "Svāmini! You are Dhīramati, You never raise Your voice to anyone, but now You chastise me in great anger!" Tulasī cries out: "Svāmini! What have I done wrong?" Svāminī says: "Why did you have to show the whole situation to Lalitā? Now she's making fun about Me! Go! Get out of My *kuñja*!" Tulasī pitifully cries: "Svāmini! Where shall I go? I don't have anybody but You!" She thinks to herself: "You may kick me or protect me, now where shall I go? Even if the cloud strikes the thirsty Cātaka-bird with a thunderbolt, the Cātaka-bird subsists only on rainwater!"[226] That is the nature of pure love:

stotraṁ yatra taṭasthatāṁ prakaṭayac cittasya dhatte vyathāṁ
nindāpi pramadaṁ prayacchati parihāsa-śriyaṁ vibhrati
doṣeṇa kṣayitāṁ guṇena gurutāṁ kenāpy anātanvatī
premnaḥ svārasikasya kasyacid iyaṁ vikrīḍati prakriyā

(Vidagdha Mādhava Act V)

"Such are the playful activities of *prema*: The lover shows a neutral mood when he is praised, but in the heart he feels pain. Even blasphemy gives him joy, for he takes it to be joking. Love does not diminish when the beloved has faults, nor does it increase, even when the beloved has great qualities." How dear Tulasī is to Svāminī! "In the material world someone loves me, someone trusts me, and that fills up my heart. But what is the value of that love and trust? Fulfillment comes for me on the day that I will get attention for my *siddha svarūpa* in the assembly of Śrī Rādhārāṇī's girlfriends and maidservants!"

Svāminī chastises Tulasī. The loving maidservant goes outside of the *kuñja,* sits with her back against the wall and cries, flooding her chest with tears. Then Lalitā comes. Tulasī covers her face, that is reddened by tears, with a veil and goes on crying. Lalitā asks: "What happened?" Tulasī is speechless and cries only more when being questioned like this. The *kiṅkarīs* are as much the objects of the *sakhīs*' affection as they are of Rādhārāṇī's affection.

[226] Narrated by Śrīla Ānanda Gopāla Gosvāmī.

Lalitā understands everything; Tulasī was punished because of the belt-affair. Affectionately she then takes Tulasī by the hand and brings her to Svāminī, telling Her: "Why are You angry with Tulasī? I saw this belt-affair myself, it's not Tulasī's fault! It's my fault, You should tell **me** to get out! Don't tell Tulasī anything!" Hearing Lalitā's words Svāmini casts a mercy-anointed sidelong glance at Tulasī. In this way Tulasī enjoys the intense mercy of Svāminī even through chastisement! Blessed is this maidservice! This is the great gift of Śrīman Mahāprabhu. Merciful Svāminī casts a mercy-anointed side-long glance at Her maidservant. How many streams of compassion are flowing from the corners of Her eyes![227] All these indescribable flavours come to perfection as soon as one considers oneself to be Rādhā's maidservant. Śrī Raghunātha dāsa is a seer of the transcendental Vraja-*rasa*. As long as there is still a whiff of material consciousness in the heart this *rasa* cannot be perceived. When a devotee obtains the mercy of similar *rasika* (aesthetic) devotees his heart, purified by *sādhana bhakti*, will spontaneously reflect the spotless moonlight that emanates from the *rāga*-moon that rises in the *ācāryas*' hearts - this is the conclusion of the scriptures on *bhakti rasa*. Svāminī is pleased with Tulasī, and Tulasī thinks: "This maidservant is Yours! You may be angry with her or pleased, but in all circumstances this Tulasī is Yours!" This is complete surrender. When the vision vanishes Śrī Raghunātha prays:

he dhairya-śālinī rādhe, e vraja-maṇḍala mājhe,
ati alpa doṣera kāraṇa.
atiśaya roṣabhare, ḍākiya āniya more,
koribe go tāḍana bhartsana.

"O grave Rādhe! In this Vraja-maṇḍala You become angry with me for committing even the slightest mistake! Very angrily You call me to You and severely chastise me!"

jāniyā tomāra guṇa, lalitā āmāre punaḥ,
loye yābe tomāra sākāśe.
na rohibe roṣa tabe, tava kṛpā dṛṣṭi hobe,
pūribe go mama abhilāṣa.

(Śrī Rasika-Candra Dāsajī)

"Lalitā, knowing Your nature, then brings me before You again, so You will no longer be angry. You will cast Your merciful glance on me and thus fulfill my desires."

.

VERSE 96:

TAVAIVĀSMI TAVAIVĀSMI
NA JĪVĀMI TVAYĀ VINĀ
ITI VIJÑĀYA DEVI TVAṀ
NAYA MĀṀ CARAṆĀNTIKAM

[227] Explanation by Śrī Ānanda Gopāla Gosvāmī

tava - yours; *eva* - surely; *asmi* - I am; *tava* - yours; *eva* - surely; *asmi* - I am; *na* - not; *jīvāmi* - I live; *tvayā vinā* - without you; *iti* - thus; *vijñāya* - knowing; *devi* - goddess; *tvaṁ* - You; *naya* - take; *māṁ* - me; *caraṇa* - lotus feet; *antikam* - close by.

I am Yours, I am Yours! I cannot live without You! O Devi! Knowing this, please take me to Your lotus feet!

Explanations: In the verses of 'Vilāpa Kusumāñjali' Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī perceives his own *siddha svarūpa* of Tulasī Mañjarī and is simultaneously blessed with transcendental devotional service in Rādhā and Mādhava's pastimes. When these visions vanish he greatly laments and prays to Svāminī's lotus feet for the attainment of these services. In the final nine verses that follow he offers prayers to Svāminī's lotus feet (in *svarūpāveśa*), to Śrī Rādhākuṇḍa, to the lotus feet of Śrī Govinda and to Śrī Viśākhā-*sakhī* for the fulfillment of his desires. In this verse *virahī* Raghunātha takes complete shelter of Svāminī's lotus feet, in order to attain them directly. Śaraṇāgati means 'taking shelter' or 'surrendering oneself'. This is the starting-point of *sādhana bhakti*; without this one cannot perform any *bhajan*. The more one surrenders, the more one advances, and the more one advances, the more one's heart is filled with feelings of surrender. Surrender is the practice and the goal of the devotees and it is their very life-force. It is their perpetual duty. Only through surrender one can attain *prema bhakti* and the lotus feet of the Lord. Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī revealed the highest stage of surrender, which means *tadaika jīvana*, "my whole life is His".

"This Tulasī is Yours, Yours! Without You I won't survive!" This is the limit of surrender. This anxious self-surrender of Rādhā's maidservants, filled with feelings of possessiveness, cannot be found in the servanthood for the Supreme Lord. "This Tulasī is Yours!" This ever-so-sweet *mahā-vāṇī* is filled with the experience of *bhajana-rasa*. The lives of the *mādhurya rasa*-devotees are blessed when they hear and chant these great words. How sweetly Tulasī surrenders here, filled with feelings of possessiveness: "This Tulasī is Yours! She cannot live without You!" Just as the bees become attracted to the opening lotus flowers at dawn, similarly the mind of the practising devotee will be attracted to Śrī Rādhikā's lotus feet after hearing these fragrant honey-like words. Tulasī offers lotus flowers that are sprinkled with the spiritual flavour of love at Śrīmatī's lotus feet.

piriti rasete ḍhāli, tanu mana diyāchi tuhāri pāya;
tumi mora pati, tumi mora gati, prāṇa āna nāhi cāya

"I have given my body and mind, soaked in the juice of love, to Your lotus feet. You are my master and You are my goal! My heart wants no-one but You!" How much the eternally perfect maidservants suffer when they are feeling separation from Śrī Rādhā in *sādhakāveśa*! They cannot live for a moment without Her! They do *bhajan* themselves and simultaneously attract the eyes of all the practising devotees of the world with their painful eagerness to do *bhajan*. Through their own activities they have shown how to awaken a feeling of want by doing *bhajan*. "Such a relish I don't get in my life. *bhajan* makes me happy, therefore I'm doing *bhajan*, but even in dreams I do not miss Śrī Rādhā!" How eager Śrī Raghunātha is, though! "With mind and heart I'm telling You - I am Yours! Touching Your feet I swear You that I'm Yours! I cannot live without You. Deprived of Your service I have fallen on the bank of Rādhākuṇḍa! I tell You honestly, I cannot live anymore!"

Śrī Raghunātha can no longer tolerate the pangs of separation from Svāmini. The poison of love-in-separation reaches his throat. His body, mind and life-airs are burning in the

fire of separation. The Gosvāmīs are the embodiments of love-in-separation and Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmi is the best example. *dāsa gosvāmīra kathā kohone nā yāya; nirantara dagdha hiyā viraha vyathāya* "Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī is indescribable. His heart always burns in the fire of separation!" Day and night this great priest of the *rāgānugā*-sacrifice weeps with tearfilled eyes on the bank of Rādhākuṇḍa, without eating, without sleeping, torn apart by the pangs of great love-in-separation, his heart so anxious to attain Śrī Rādhā's intimate service. Forgetting everything else, he simply desires the eligibility to serve Śrī Rādhā's lotus feet - nothing else! How much hope he carries in his heart while taking full shelter of Priyāji's dearmost place, the bank of Rādhākuṇḍa. How many days, how many months, how many years have passed - still he did not attain the audience and the service of his Prāṇeśvarī. What's the use of still keeping these life-airs, that are burning in the forestfire of separation, within the physical frame? *na jīvāmi tvayā vinā* "I cannot live without You!"

Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī was completely showered by the loving compassion of Śrī Gaurasundara, the embodiment of the flavour love in separation (*vipralambha ghana rasa mūrti*), and for a long time he was one of the Lord's most intimate associates in His Gambhīrā-pastimes and a personal witness of these unique pastimes of ecstatic *prema*. Advanced loving devotees can understand from this Gambhīrā-*līlā* how sweet the Lord is, how dear He is to the heart and how powerful is the attractiveness of His love. How many anxious endeavours the devotees make to see Him, and how full of sweet nectar is that silent and motionless swoon of ecstatic love in the end! Even now the loving devotees become unsteady when they are rocked by the high waves of the naturally severe *rasa* of love-in-separation as they remember this silence in the Gambhīrā-cell. The following pitiful sound is always entering their ears, breaking the deep silence in the Gambhīrā like the dimmed chirping of a cricket:

kāhā koro kāhā pāo vrajendra-nandana;
kāhā mora prāṇanātha muralī-vadana
kāhāre kohibo ke vā jāne mora duḥkha;
vrajendra-nandana vinā phāṭe mora buka {C.C.}

"Where shall I go, what shall I do to get Vrajendra-nandana? Where is the flute-playing Lord of My life? Whom shall I tell, who will know of My distress? Without Vrajendra-nandana My heart breaks!" Raghunātha dāsa is always immersed in this vast ocean of love-in-separation, because he stayed with the Lord for so long in His pastimes in Purī, sticking to Him like His shadow, and the Lord has mercifully infused some of His great loving anxiety in him.

In great anguish Śrī Raghunātha prays to Svāmini's lotus feet: "How much longer can I live, cast away from Your lotus feet? In this life I've never offered myself to anyone else's lotus feet! Understanding this, please quickly take this fallen maidservant to Your lotus feet now!" Hearing Raghunātha Dāsa's anxious cries, all the creatures in and around Rādhākuṇḍa are crying with pity. Śrīla Raghunātha Dāsa has given up eating and sleeping and is crying constantly, his heart burning in the fire of separation. Although he has almost fainted, his lips can still tremble and say: *na jīvāmi tvayā vinā* - 'I cannot live without You!'
Śrīla Rasika-Candra Dāsa sings:

jīvane maraṇe niti, tumi se āmāra gati,
āmi ye tomāri āmi tomāri!
tomā vinā e jīvana, bujhilām akāraṇa,
bhāra mātra bohi sadā phiri.

"You are my goal, in life or in death, I am Yours! I am Yours! I understood that my life is useless without You! I simply wander around carrying this life as a heavy burden!"

ihā jāni devi more, dāsī aṅgīkāra kore,
nija pāda padme dāo sthāne
se snigdha caraṇa chāyā, kobe go juḍābe hāya,
dāsīra e tāpita parāṇa?

"O Goddess, now that You know this, please accept this maidservant! Grant me a place at Your lotus feet! Alas! When will the pleasant shade of Your lotus feet console the afflicted heart of this maidservant?"

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VERSE 97:

SVA KUṆḌAṀ TAVA LOLĀKṢI SAPRIYĀYĀḤ SADĀSPADAM
ATRAIVA MAMA SAṀVĀSA IHAIVA MAMA SAṀSTHITIḤ

sva - own; *kuṇḍaṁ* - lake; *tava* - Your; *lola* - restless; *akṣi* - eyes (fem.); *sa* - with; *priyāyāḥ* - with Your beloved; *sadā* - always: *āspadam* - abode; *atra* - here; *eva* - surely; *mama* - my; *saṁvāsa* - abode; *iha* - here; *eva* - surely; *mama* - my; *samsthitiḥ* - abode.

O Lolākṣi (restless eyed girl)! Your lake is always the dwelling place of You and Your Beloved. Here only I will live and here alone I will stay!

Explanations: In the previous verse Śrī Raghunātha desired to be taken close to Śrī Rādhārāṇī's feet, and along with this desire for direct *caraṇa-sevā* (foot-service) a natural flood of humility arises in the heart of the lover. When this humility arises the lover cries about his own unworthiness. Śrī Rādhā's lotus feet are very rarely attained. Even Lord Brahmā, Lord Śiva, Uddhava and others can hardly get a speck of dust from these most wonderful feet. *brahmeśvarādi sudurūha padāravinda śrīmat parāga paramādbhuta vaibhavāyāḥ* (Rādhā Rasa Sudhānidhi - 3). Śrī Raghunātha thinks: "Alas! Am I worthy to attain these precious feet of Śrī Rādhā? O restless-eyed Svāmini! I'm totally unqualified to serve Your lotus feet, hence I say - this *kuṇḍa* is most dear to You and Your Priyatama, You don't have any more beautiful place in Vraja for Your loving pastimes than this! O Īśvari! May I reside here! Please be kind to me and don't let me go anywhere, away from Your *kuṇḍa*!" Śrī Raghunātha's heart is filled with the relish of Śrī Rādhākuṇḍa. Whenever Śrī Raghunātha considers the precious *śrī caraṇa-sevā* of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa to be hard to attain the firm determination to live at Śrī Rādhākuṇḍa arises in his mind. At the end of his Stavāvalī, in his Prārthanāśraya Caturdaśakam (3) Śrīla Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī prays:

udañcat kārunyāmṛta vitaraṇair jīvita jagad
yuva-dvandvaṁ gandhair guṇa sumanasaṁ vāsita janam
kṛpāṁ cen mayy evaṁ kirati na tadā tvaṁ kuru tathā
yathā me śrī kuṇḍe sakhi sakalam aṅgaṁ nivasati

"O *sakhi* Rūpa Mañjari! If the adolescent Couple, who revive the whole world with a shower of nectarean mercy and who scent all the people with the fragrance of Their flower-

like attributes, are not merciful to me, then please arrange it for me that I can live my whole life at Śrī Rādhākuṇḍa (and that I may leave my body there)!" In this verse also Śrīpāda shows a firm resolve to live at Śrī Rādhākuṇḍa and to leave his body there.

atraiva mama saṁvāsa "Here I will firmly reside, and even if there is a very important duty to perform elsewhere, may I not go anywhere else". Therefore he says *ihaiva mama saṁsthitiḥ*. The verbal root *stha* stands for *gati nivṛtti*, or cessation of motion.[228] Such an unshakable determination is the root cause of perfection for the practising devotees, and it is seen in all the self-realized souls. The assembly of practising devotees is well acquainted with the vow Lord Buddha took before he reached perfection. Sitting under the Bodhi-tree he vowed:

ihāsane śoṣyatu me śarīraṁ tvag asthi māṁsaṁ vilayaṁ ca yātu
aprāpya bodhiṁ bahu kalpa durlabhāṁ naivāsanāt kāyamataś caliṣyate

"My body may parch under this tree and My skin, bones and flesh may dissolve, but until I reached enlightenment, even if it takes many ages, I will not move My body from this sitting place!" The same firm determination is visible in Śrīmad Dāsa Gosvāmī's words *atraiva mama samvāsa ihaiva mama saṁsthitiḥ*. In his Prārthanāśraya Caturdaśakam (13 and 14) he also says:

girivara-taṭa kuñje mañju vṛndāvaneśā
sarasi ca racayan śrī rādhikā Kṛṣṇa-kīrtim
dhṛta rati ramanīyaṁ saṁsmaraṁs tat padābjaṁ
vraja dadhi phalam aśnan sarva kālaṁ vasāmi

"I will spend all my time at the base of Girirāja Govardhana, by the charming lake of Vṛndāvaneśvarī, singing the glories of Śrī Rādhikā and Kṛṣṇa, remembering Their beautiful lotus feet with great loving attachment and eating fruits and yoghurt from Vraja."

vasato giri-vara kuñje lapataḥ śrī rādhike'nu kṛṣṇeti
dhāyato vraja dadhi takraṁ nātha sadā me dināni gacchantu

"O master (Rūpa Gosvāmī)! May I spend all my days in a *kuñja* at the foot of Girirāja Govardhana, singing 'Śrī Rādhike! Kṛṣṇa!' and drinking yoghurt and buttermilk from Vraja!" In great ecstatic love Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī prays like this again and again. Day and night, in dreams and in wakefulness, he cherishes only one desire - Śrī Rādhikā's intimate service, and he expresses that in different moods and in different words. The powerful riverstream of his love constantly flows with high waves towards the ocean of Śrī Rādhikā's devotional service. This stream does not stop, and it does not rest....

Tulasī says: "Hā Svāmini! You are Mahābhāvamayi! I'm unqualified for attaining the service of Your lotus feet, like a dwarf reaching for the moon. Still I cannot give up the desire for them." This transcendental greed does not allow the devotee to consider whether he is qualified or not. "I am completely overwhelmed by this greed! Who else can be so merciful to give a desperate soul like me that service of Your lotus feet? Thinking like this I remembered Your dear lake Rādhākuṇḍa! O Restless-eyed girl! Please be so merciful to allow me always to live on the bank of Your lake! Because this lake is Your dearmost place I will surely receive Your mercy by taking shelter of it! Surely one day Your loving pastimes in this lake will appear before the spiritualised eyes of an unfortunate soul like me!"
Śrī Rasika-Candra Dāsa sings:

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[228] Śrī Baṅgabihārī Vidyālaṅkāra comments: *he lolākṣi svakuṇḍa vāsinam ayogyam api janaṁ kalayitum*: "O restless eyed girl! Although I am unqualified to live at Rādhākuṇḍa, Your restless eyes still mercifully glance upon me!"

cañcala nayani rāi! ei bhikṣā tomā cāi,
śuno mora monera vāsanā.
tava kuṇḍa ati sāndra, prema vilāsera kendra,
ei sthāne koriyā karuṇā.

vāsa more dibe niti, nitya more hobe sthiti,
kutūhole rahibo paḍiyā.
sakhī priyatama sane, premalīlā daraśane,
ānande bhāsābe mora hiyā.

"O restless-eyed Rāi! I want this alm from You, listen to my heart's desire! Please give me an eternal place by Your *kuṇḍa*, which is the centre of Your intense loving pastimes! I am very eager to stay there! My heart will float in an ocean of bliss when I can see Your love-pastimes there with Your *sakhīs* and Your Priyatama!"

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VERSE 98:

HE ŚRĪ SAROVARA SADĀ TVAYI SĀ MAD ĪŚĀ
PREṢṬHENA SĀRDHAM IHA KHELATI KĀMA RAṄGAIḤ
TVAṀ CET PRIYĀT PRIYAM ATĪVA TAYOR ITĪMĀṀ
HA DARŚAYĀDYA KṚPAYĀ MAMA JĪVITAṀ TĀM

he - O!; *śrī sarovara* - beautiful lake; *sadā* - always; *tvayi* - in you; *sā* - She; *mad* - my; *īśā* - mistress; *preṣṭhena sārdham* - with Her beloved; *iha* - here; *khelati* - plays; *kāma* - lusty; *raṅgaiḥ* - with games; *tvaṁ* - you; *cet* - if; *priyāt* - than the dear; *priyam* - dear; *atīva* - very much; *tayoḥ* - of both; *iti* - thus; *imāṁ* - Rādhā; *hā* - O!; *darśaya* - show; *adya* - now; *kṛpayā* - by your grace; *mama* - my; *jīvitam* - my life; *tām* - her.

O beautiful lake (Rādhākuṇḍa)! My mistress always plays erotic games in you with Her beloved Krsna. If you are dearer to Them than the dearest, then please show me my mistress, who is my very life!

Explanations: Śrī Raghunātha's mind is absorbed in the glories of Śrī Rādhākuṇḍa. In the previous verse he humbly realized his own unworthiness and how rarely Śrī Rādhā's personal service or audience is attained, and therefore he prayed to Her lotus feet that he may be fixed in living at Śrī Rādhākuṇḍa. In this verse he becomes unsteady while realizing the *kuṇḍa*'s glories, so he prays to Śrī Rādhākuṇḍa that he may see Śrī Rādhārāṇī, who is his very life (*prāṇa svarūpiṇī*) this very day. Śrī Rādhākuṇḍa makes no distinction between who is qualified and who is not and blesses everyone who performs some devotional service there with the treasure of *prema*, even if they do not perform any *sādhana bhajan*. Śrīla Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī, who had personally experienced this, states in his Rādhākuṇḍāṣṭakam (5):

api jana iha kaścid yasya sevā prasādaiḥ praṇaya suralatā syāttasya goṣṭhendra sūnoḥ
sapadi kila mad īśā dāsya puṣpa praśasyās tad ati surabhi rādhākuṇḍam evāśrayo me

"That beautiful Rādhākuṇḍa, by whose grace the desire-vine of love for Kṛṣṇa, that bears the flowers of service to my Queen Rādhikā, instantly sprouts in the heart of anyone who performs devotional service there, is my only shelter!" This place is dearer to Śrī-Śrī Rādhā-Mādhava than the dearest place, because there are beautiful intimate *kuñjas* all around where They can freely enjoy all Their intimate pastimes. Śrīla Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī writes in his 'Vraja Vilāsa Stava' (53):

śrī vṛndā-vipinaṁ suramyam api tac chrīman sa govardhanaḥ
sa rāsa-sthalikāpy alaṁ rasamayī kim tāvad anya sthalam
yasyāpy aṁśa lavena nārhati manāk sāmyaṁ mukundasya tat
prāṇebhyo'py adhika priyeva dayitaṁ tat kuṇḍam evāśraye

"The delightful forest of Vṛndāvana, beautiful Govardhana Hill and the nectarean arena of the Rāsa-dance, what to speak of other places, are not equal to even a single particle of one of the atoms of Śrī Rādhākuṇḍa. I take shelter of that divine lake, which is dearer to Mukunda than His own life breath." That this is not an exaggerated devotional glorification, is proven by this statement from the Padma Purāṇa:

yathā rādhā priyā viṣṇos tasyāḥ kuṇḍaṁ priyaṁ tathā
sarva gopīṣu saivaika viṣṇor atyanta vallabhā

"Just as Rādhā is dear to Lord Visnu, so is Her *kuṇḍa*. Of all the *gopīs* She alone is Lord Viṣṇu's most beloved One!" Although it seems that Rādhākuṇḍa and Śyāmakuṇḍa are filled with ordinary water, they are actually filled with erotic spiritual flavours:

doṅhāra ujjvala madhura ye rasa varṇa viparyaya kori
rahasya lāgiyā bhakte sukha diyā āche 'sara' nāma dhari
se kāraṇa bhakta sara kori vyakta se rase koriya snāna;
kṛṣṇera kṛpāya rādhā sama prema lābha kore bhāgyavān
śrī Kṛṣṇa jokhon rādhā daraśana lāgi' utkaṇṭhita hoy;
sakala upāya viphala hoiyā rādhākuṇḍāśraya loy
tat kāle rādhāra pāy daraśana emati kuṇḍa prabhāva;
rādhāra emati śyāmakuṇḍāśraye Kṛṣṇa saṅga hoy lābha

"When reversing the syllables of the word *rasa*, which means 'the sweet erotic flavour of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa's play', you get the word *sara*, which means 'lake' (Rādhākuṇḍa). This secret makes the devotees very happy. Understanding *sara* (lake) to mean *rasa* (spiritual flavour), the devotees bathe there and a fortunate soul then attains a love for Kṛṣṇa equal to that of Rādhā's, by Kṛṣṇa's grace. When Kṛṣṇa is eager to see Rādhā and all His endeavours fail He takes shelter of Rādhākuṇḍa, on whose strength He then gets to meet Her. Śrī Rādhā similarly takes shelter of Śyāmakuṇḍa to attain Kṛṣṇa's association." Through their inconceivable potency these two *kuṇḍas* delight separated Rādhā and Śyāma by arranging for Their meetings, therefore Śrī-Kuṇḍa is dearer to the Śrī Yugala than anything or anyone. Virahī Śrī Raghunātha dāsa falls on the bank of the *kuṇḍa* and cries out: "O beautiful Rādhākuṇḍa! How glorious you are! If you can delight the separated Couple by arranging for Their meeting, then please also allow this fallen wretch, who has fallen on your banks, weeping, to see Īśvarī's lotus feet now!" And if the *kuṇḍa* says: "Śrīpāda! Be patient! You will see Them in due course of time! Why do you want to see them right now?", then Raghunātha

answers: *mama jīvitaṁ tām* "O beautiful *kuṇḍa*! Īśvarī (Śrī Rādhikā) is my very life! Without Her I cannot stay alive for even a moment anymore!"
Śrī Haripada Śila sings:

he śrī rādhākuṇḍa vara, mahā tīrtha sarovara,
tīre mad īśvarī rādhārāṇī
matta hoiyā kāma raṅge, āpana vallabha saṅge,
keli kore divasa rajanī

"O Śrī Rādhākuṇḍa! O Best of holy lakes! On Your banks my mistress Rādhārāṇī is intoxicated day and night by Her lovesports with Her gallant."

rasera pāthāre niti, snāna kore bhāgyavatī,
rādhākuṇḍa yugalera priya
āmāra jīviteśvarī, dekhāibe kuṇḍeśvarī,
sarovara hoiyā sadoya

"A beautiful fortunate girl can nicely bathe in the ocean of *rasa* Śrī Rādhākuṇḍa, the beloved lake of the Divine Couple. O Lake! Be kind and show me the queen of my life and the queen of the *kuṇḍa*!"

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VERSE 99:

KṢAṆAM API TAVA SAṄGAṀ NA TYAJED EVA DEVĪ
TVAṀ ASI SAMAVAYASTVĀN NARMA-BHŪMIR YAD ASYĀḤ
ITI SUMUKHI VIŚĀKHE DARŚAYITVĀ MAD ĪŚĀṀ
MAMA VIRAHA HATĀYĀḤ PRĀṆA-RAKṢĀṀ KURUṢVA

kṣaṇam - a moment; *api* - even; *tava* - Your; *saṅgaṁ* - company; *na* - not; *tyajet* - gives up; *eva* - surely; *devī* - goddess; *tvam* - You; *asi* - are; *sama-vayastvāt* - from being of the same age; *tad* - that; *narma* - joking pastimes; *bhūmi* - abode; *yad* - which; *asyāḥ* - of her; *iti* - thus; *sumukhi* - fairfaced girl; *viśākhe* - O Viśākhā!; *darśayitvā* - having shown; *mad* - my; *īśāṁ* - mistress; *mama* - my; *viraha* - separation; *hatāyāḥ* - to an afflicted soul; *prāṇa* - life; *rakṣāṁ* - save; *kuruṣva* - please do!

O fair-faced Viśākhe! My Queen will not leave your company for even a moment! Because You are of the same age you are the realm of Her joking pastimes. Please save my life from the affliction of separation and show me my mistress!

Explanations: Śrī Raghunātha's life-airs reach his throat (he is about to die) out of separation from Śrī Rādhā. Remembering Śrī Rādhākuṇḍa's glories, he falls on the bank of the *kuṇḍa* and laments - I want to see Svāmini now - at this very moment! My life cannot remain in this body anymore!" His heart is floating on his tears. At this moment he hears

anklebells jingling. Who is seemingly calling: "Tulasi! Why are you crying?" He opens his eyes and sees Śrī Viśākhā-*sakhī* standing before him. Being her follower he falls at her feet and says: "O fair-faced Viśākhe! You are equal to my mistress in form, qualities, nature and age, and you are the object of Her confidence! My Svāmini does not leave your company for even a second!" In the beginning of his 'Viśākhānandadā stotram', Śrī Raghunātha dāsa has written:

bhāva nāma guṇādinām aikyāt śrī rādhikaiva yā
kṛṣṇendoḥ preyasī sā me śrī viśākhā prasīdatu

"May Śrī Viśākhā, Kṛṣṇacandra's beloved, who has the same mood, name (Viśākhā is another name of the Rādhā-star) and qualities as Śrī Rādhikā, be pleased with me!" She has a deep loving friendship with Śrī Rādhārāṇī, who is a little bit afraid of Śrī Lalitā. Śrī Viśākhā is Śrī Rādhā's *narma bhūmi*, the abode of Her confidence (literally the abode of joking and humour). About this it is written in Viśākhānandadā-stotram (17, 105, 106):

viśākhā narma-sakhyena sukhitā tad gatātmikā
.....
viśākhā gūḍha narmokti jita kṛṣṇārpita smitā
narmādhyāya varācāryā bhāratī jayi vāgmitā
viśākhāgre rahaḥ keli kathodghaṭaka mādhavam
tāḍayanti dvirabjena sa-bhrūbhaṅgena līlayā

"Śrī Rādhikā is gladdened by Viśākhā's *narma*-friendship and has given Her heart to her.....Śrī Rādhikā smiles when She sees that Kṛṣṇa is defeated by Viśākhā's intimate joking words. She is the best teacher in joking and she defeats even Sarasvatī-devī in eloquence. When Mādhava speaks about His intimate pastimes before Viśākhā, Śrī Rādhā frowns Her eyebrows and playfully beats Him with her playlotus." From this we can understand that Viśākhā is Śrī Rādhā's *narma-bhūmi*. Svāminī does not leave Viśākhā's company for even a moment, because Viśākhā is Her *abhinna-prāṇā* (inseparable bosom-friend, lit: non-different life-airs). Wherever Rādhikā cannot go personally She sends Viśākhā. For instance, in the Holi-pastimes, Svāmini takes Lalitā in Her own ranks and keeps Viśākhā in Kṛṣṇa's party, knowing that she will take care of Her affairs there. Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī has written in Ujjvala Nīlamaṇi (Dūtibheda 87):

tvam asi mad asavo bahiś carantas tvayi mahatī paṭutā ca vāgmitā ca
laghur api laghimā na me yathā syān mayi sakhi rañjaya mādhavaṁ tathādya

Śrī Rādhā told Viśākhā: "Sakhi! You are My life-airs on the outside (i.e. My second form)! You are both very clever and very eloquent! Therefore today you must make Mādhava attached to Me in such a way that My prestige is not even slightly diminished! Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartīpāda has made a truly incomparibly relishable commentary on this verse in his Ānanda Candrikā-ṭīkā:

Śrī Rādhikā said: "Sakhi Viśākhe! You are the external manifestation of My life-airs, and therefore I have great faith in you! You are very clever and eloquent, so please go and see Mādhava on the pretext of picking flowers, but pretend not to see Him. Just speak about Me casually with your girlfriends, describing the supremacy of My form, qualities and love in front of Him. Hearing this, Kṛṣṇa will then ask you: "Sakhi! Whose wonderful sweetness are you glorifying? Then you will anxiously and carefully bite your tongue and say: "No, no-one's!" Then Kṛṣṇa will say: "Sakhi, why are you afraid? There's no harm in telling Me! Allright, then don't tell Me, but I'm already acquainted with Her anyway!" Then you will have to say: "Mādhava! What's the use of being acquainted to Her for You?" He will say: "Sakhi, I have a very confidential relationship with Her!" Then you must say: "Get out of here, Mādhava!

There's too much difference between the Two of You! There can't be any intimacy between You!" He will say: "Sakhi! What difference is there between Our natures?" Then you must say: "You are a debauchee and She's devoted to Her husband. You are whimsical and She is steady. You are impious and She is devoted to the *devas*. You are dirty and She takes three baths a day, after which She puts on clean clothes!" Kṛṣṇa will then say: "Viśākhe! (As far as chastity is concerned:) I'm also a *brahmacārī*! In the Gopāla Tāpanī Upaniṣad I am described as a *brahmacārī*! And how can you call Me whimsical? I held up Govardhana Hill for seven days with steady hand! You were all able to see that! And how am I impious? On the order of My parents I took initiation into Viṣṇu-*mantra* from Bhāgurī Muni! (Brāhmaṇas like) Paurṇamāsī, Gārgī and Nāndīmukhī all know this! And I'm also not dirty, I'm *śuci* (purity, or eros) itself! I can prove it through your own experience!"

Then you must say: "But Mādhava! Still You are a man and She's a married girl. She will never look at You!" He will then say: "Even if She does not look at Me I will be blessed by looking at this virtuous girl even from afar!" Then you must say: "Mādhava, how will You accomplish that?" He will say: "There is one way. Today I will personally install a deity of the Sungod in a cave of Govardhana Hill, smear that temple with My own hands (with clay or unguents) and wait for Her from a distance. Then you must take Her there to see and worship that deity. When She sits there for doing *pūjā* I will be satisfied just by looking at Her from the back, and if you are kind upon Me then I will be allowed just to touch Her footsoles once!"

Then you must say: "Mādhava! What reward will You give me?" He will say: "Sakhi! What more is there to give to you? I will sell My very soul to you!" Then you must say: "Just wait Mādhava! I will fulfill all Your desires!", and come back to Me to bring Me there!" Thus Śrīmatī reveals Her desires to Viśākhā, who is Her bosom-friend and who is the abode of Her humour.

Śrī Raghunātha eagerly desires that Viśākhā's mercy. After he described Śrī Rādhārāni's matchless sweetness, he called his prayer: 'Viśākhānandadā', the hymn that will delight Viśākhā. After hearing Śrī Raghunātha dāsa's wonderful glorification of Śrī Rādhā, Śrī Viśākhā will cast a merciful glance on him and engage him in Śrīmatī's service. This is the desire Śrī Raghunātha dāsa carries in his heart.[229] In *svarūpāveśa* Śrī Raghunātha says: "O Viśākhe! You are dear to my mistress! My heart is suffering from separation! Please revive me by showing me my Svāminī just once! I cannot stay alive without seeing Svāminī for a moment anymore!" *mama viraha hatāyāḥ prāṇa-rakṣāṁ kuruṣva*
Śrī Haripada Śila sings:

he sumukhi viśākhikā, savayasa śrī rādhikā,
tomāra jīvanī prītyāspada
kṣaṇa kāla saṅga chāḍā, nāhi hāo ye tomarā,
kautuka līlāte gadgada

"O fair-faced Viśākhā! Your girlfriend Śrī Rādhikā (*savayasa* means 'of the same age') is the abode of your heart's love! You don't leave Each other's company for even a second, because you always play joking ecstatic pastimes together!"

adarśane kuñjeśvarī, tile tile prāṇe mari,
śela viddha viraha yātanā
he viśākhā ṭhākurāṇī, sadoya hoiyā tumi,
dekhābe ki Kṛṣṇa priyatamā?

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[229] Śrī Baṅgabihārī Vidyālaṅkāra adds: *narma pracāra samaye tasyāḥ sumanastvena mad dainyaṁ nivedayitvā māṁ ānāyya darśayeti bhāvaḥ* "Please Viśākhe! You are the abode of Svāminī's humour! When you are making jokes with Svāminī you must tell Her about my miserable condition, because then She's in a good mood! Please bring me to Her then and show me to Her!"

"I am dying at every moment because I cannot see the queen of Vraja's love-bowers. I am suffering very much from the spikes of separation! O goddess Viśākhā! Will you be so kind to show me Kṛṣṇa's Beloved Rādhikā?"

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VERSE 100:

HĀ NĀTHA GOKULA SUDHĀKARA SUPRASANNA
VAKTRĀRAVINDA MADHURA SMITA HE KṚPĀRDRA
YATRA TVAYĀ VIHARATE PRAṆAYAIR PṚIYĀRĀT
TATRAIVA MĀM API NAYA PṚIYA SEVANĀYA

hā - O!; *nātha* - Lord; *gokula* - Gokula, or: of the senses; *sudhākara* - moon, or giver of nectar; *suprasanna* - very satisfied; *vaktra* - face; *aravinda* - lotus; *madhura* - sweet; *smita* - smile; *he* - O!; *kṛpā* - with mercy; *ardra* - softened; *yatra* - wherever; *tvayā* - with You; *viharate* - enjoys; *praṇayaiḥ* - with love; *priyā* Your beloved girl; *ārāt* - close by; *tatra* - there; *eva* - only; *mām* - me; *api* - also; *naya* - take; *priya* - dear; *sevanāya* - for the service.

O Lord, O Nectar-moon of Gokula! O You who are melting with compassion! O You whose lotuslike face smiles sweetly and satisfied! Wherever You go to enjoy loving pastimes with Your beloved, please take me there, so that I can affectionately serve You there!

Explanations: With tearfilled eyes and a heart suffering of separation Śrī Raghunātha prayed to Viśākhā's lotus feet for Śrī Rādhārāṇī's *darśana*. When he wipes the tears from his eyes he sees that Viśākhājī has disappeared and Śyāmasundara has come before him. Seeing him, Śrī Raghunātha dāsa prays to His lotus feet: "O Lord! O moon of Gokula! O You whose lotusface is satisfied and smiling sweetly! O You who melts with compassion! Take me wherever You go, so that I can serve You!" Every address is connected with the *kiṅkarī*'s beloved service. "Hā Nātha! You are the lover of my mistress, therefore You are also my Lord! You find great difficulty in meeting Each other, although You are very attracted to Each other's forms, qualities and love. Therefore You will greatly need me to bring about Your blissful meeting!" Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī has described this mutual love of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa in ten verses that glorify Kṛṣṇa's names called Līlāmṛta (in Stavamālā):

rādhikā hṛdayonmādi vaṁśīkvāna madhucchaṭāḥ;
rādhā parimalodgāra garimākṣipta mānasaḥ
kamra rādhā mano mīna baḍiśī kṛta vibhramaḥ;
prema garvāndha gāndharvā kilakiñcita rañjitaḥ
lalitā vaśyadhī rādhā mānābhāsa vaśīkṛtaḥ;
rādhā vakrokti pīyūṣa mādhurya bhara lampaṭaḥ
mukhendu candrikodgīrṇa rādhikā rāga sāgaraḥ;
vṛṣabhānu sutā kaṇṭha hāri hāra harinmaṇiḥ

phulla rādhā kamalinī mukhāmbuja madhuvrataḥ;
rādhikā kuca kasturī patra sphurad ura-sthalaḥ
iti gokula bhūpāla sūnu līlā manoharam;
yaḥ paṭhen nāma-daśakam so'sya vallabhatāṁ vrajet

"He maddens Rādhikā's heart with the honey-drops of His flutesong, His mind is grasped by Rādhā's bodily fragrance, His pastimes are the hook that catch the beautiful Rādhā's fish-like mind, and He's very attached to the *kila kiñcit*-ecstasy of Gāndharvā (Rādhā) who is blinded with loving pride. He is upset when Rādhā, who is totally controlled by Her friend Lalitā, is even slightly piqued at Him, He is very eager to drink the sweet nectar of Śrī Rādhā's crooked words, the rays of His moon-like face cause the ocean of Śrī Rādhikā's passionate love to swell and He is like an emerald in the necklace of Vṛṣabhānu's daughter. He is like a bumblebee attached to Rādhā's blooming lotuslike face and the musk-pictures of Rādhikā's breasts have been printed on His chest when He embraced Her. Anyone who recites these ten names of the prince of Gokula, that are connected with His enchanting pastimes, is very dear to Him."

There is a secret hidden in the name 'Gokula Sudhākara': *go* means senses; *kula* means the group and *sudhākara* means the giver of nectar. Here Kṛṣṇa is called 'the giver of nectar (pleasure) to Śrī Rādhikā's senses'. "You can madden all (*kula*) of Rādhikā's senses (*go*). You will need me to console this *prema pāgalinī* (Rādhā, who is madly in love with You) and help Her to come and meet You in the trysting-grove!"[230] How Śrī Rādhā's five senses are attracted to Govinda is described in Govinda Lilāmṛta (8.3) :

saundaryāmṛta sindhu bhaṅga lalanā cittādri samplāvakaḥ
karṇānandī sanarma ramya vacanaḥ koṭīndu śītāṅgakaḥ
saurabhyāmṛta samplavāvṛta jagat pīyūṣa ramyādharaḥ
śrī gopendra suta sa karṣati balāt pañcendriyāny āli me

Śrī Rādhikā told Her friend Viśākhā: "O dear friend! Kṛṣṇa, the prince of cowherders, inundates the mountain-like minds of the women of Vraja with the ocean of His nectarean beauty, He delights their ears with His pleasant joking words and He pleases their bodies (the sense of touch) with His body, that is cooler than millions of moons! He inundates the world with His ambrosial fragrance and with the nectar of His pleasing lips. In this way He forcibly attracts all My five senses!"

When Śrī Raghunātha dāsa remembers Śrīmatī's eagerness, he says *he suprasanna vaktrāravinda* "O You whose lotuslike face shines with satisfaction!" Śyāma and Svāminī sit down on one seat. Svāminī's love is so full of eagerness that She feels separation from Śyāma even when She sits on His lap (this is called *prema vaicittya*) and cries out: "O Lord! O beloved! Where are You?" Seeing Her condition, Śyāma is astonished and filled with ecstasy. His lotuslike face looks very satisfied then. "Because nobody knows what *utkaṇṭhāvatī* (eager Rādhikā) may say or do next it's necessary to keep a maidservant around. Therefore", Tulasī says, "take me to Your kingdom of spiritual pastimes!"

There is a very confidential explanation of the names 'Madhura smita' (sweetly smiling One) and 'Kṛpārdra' (You who melts with compassion). Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa are playing in the *kuñja* and Svāminī has seized Śyāmasundara's play. Telling Him: "You don't know how to play!" She takes Him by the hand to teach Him all erotic arts. When Śyāma sees Svāmini's endeavours He smiles softly and sweetly (*madhura smita*). After Their lovesports Svāminī is exhausted and lies down on Śyāma's chest. Śyāma then melts with compassion (*kṛpārdra*) and begins to serve Her and remove Her fatigue by fanning Her and massaging Her. Tulasī prays:

[230] Explanation by Śrī Ānanda Gopāla Gosvāmī.

"Take me to the kingdom of Your pastimes, so that I can serve Your beloved there with love!" Whose beloved shall she serve? "Svāminī's beloved (You) or Your beloved (Svāminī)! Whatever service You cannot do for Svāminī I will do and whatever service Svāminī cannot do for You I will do!"[231] Saying this Śrī Raghunātha's heart becomes overwhelmed by transcendental anxiety.
Śrī Haripada Śila sings:

he nātha gokulānanda, suprasanna mukhāravinda,
gopījana nayana ānanda
he dīna dayārdra cita, amṛta madhura smita
śrī rādhā vallabha śrī govinda

"O Lord Gokulānanda with Your satisfied lotusface! O Joy to the eyes of the *gopīs*! O You whose heart is melting with compassion for the fallen! O You with the nectar-sweet smile! O Lover of Rādhā! O Śrī Govinda!"

priyā saṅge praṇayete, līlā koro ye kuñjete,
hāsya parihāsa rasamoya
navīna yugala sevā, ei dhana more dibā,
nāgarendra hoiyā sadoya

"Please allow me to serve You when You play loving pastimes that are full of *rasika* joking and laughter with Priyā Rādhikā in the forest bowers. O King of gallants! Please give me the treasure of the service of the eternally young Couple!"

.

VERSE 101:

LAKṢMĪR YAD AṄGHRI KAMALASYA NAKHĀÑCALASYA
SAṆUNDARYA BINDUM API NĀRHATI LABDHAM ĪŚE
SĀ TVAṀ VIDHĀSYASI NA CEN MAMA NETRA-DĀNAṀ
KIṀ JĪVITENA MAMA DUḤKHA DAVĀGNIDENA

lakṣmīḥ - the goddess of fortune; *yad* - whose; *aṅghri* - feet; *kamalasya* - of the lotus; *nakha* - nail; *añcalasya* - of the tip; *saundarya* - beauty; *bindum* - drop; *api* - even; *na* - not; *arhati* - should; *labdham* - attain; *īśe* - O goddess!; *sā* - She; *tvaṁ* - You; *vidhāsyasi* - will give; *na* - not; *cet* - if; *mama* - my; *netra* - eye; *dānaṁ* - gift; *kiṁ* - what; *jīvitena* - with life; *mama* - my; *duḥkha* - sorrow; *dava* - forest; *agnidena* - by giving fire.

O Īśe (goddess)! The goddess of fortune cannot attain even a drop of the beauty of the tips of Your lotuslike footnails! If You do not bestow

[231] Explanation by Śrī Ānanda Gopāla Gosvāmī.

the gift of Your audience to my eyes, then what is the use of this life, that just burns in a forestfire of sorrow?

Explanations: In the previous verse Śrī Raghunātha offered his heart's prayers to Śyāmasundara's lotus feet, and from this verse on he prays again to Svāminī's lotus feet. Śrī Raghunātha dāsa says: "O Prāṇeśvari (queen of my life)! Do You think I don't know You? Why are You playing hide-and-seek with me? Lakṣmī is not even as beautiful as the tip of one of the nails on Your lotuslike toes!" Caitanya Caritāmṛta says: *yāra saundaryādi guṇa vāñche lakṣmī pārvatī* "The goddess of fortune and Pārvatī desire Rādhikā's qualities like beauty". Śrī Prabodhānanda Sarasvatī writes in his Rādhā Rasa Sudhānidhi (68): *lakṣmī koṭi vilakṣa lakṣaṇa lasallīlā kiśorī śatair ārādhyaṁ vraja maṇḍale'ti madhuraṁ rādhābhidhānaṁ param* "Śrī Rādhā, the sweet Supreme, is worshiped by hundreds of adolescent young girls in Vraja, who have themselves characteristics that excel even millions of goddesses of fortune!" No one in the world can compare to Her in transcendental beauty, virtues and form! The Gopāla Tāpanī Upaniṣad states: *tasyādyā prakṛti rādhikā nitya nirguṇā yasyāṁśe lakṣmI durgādikā śaktayaḥ* "God's primary potency is Rādhikā, who is eternally elevated beyond the modes of material nature and whose mere fractions are other potencies such as Lakṣmī, Durgā and others." Just as Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the transcendental cause of all causes, so is Śrī Rādhā. In this connection the Gopāla Tāpanī Upaniṣad describes Her as the Lord's primeval potency and *tantras* like the Nārada Pañcarātra and the Gautamīya Tantra describe Her as the supreme potency (*parā śakti*). Śrī Rādhā and Śrī Lakṣmī are both embodiments of the Lord's pleasure-potency, but Śrī Rādhā is the sweet form (*mādhurya mūrtiḥ*) and Lakṣmī is the majestic form (*aiśvarya mūrtiḥ*) of that same potency. Śrī Rādhā's beauty and sweetness is unrivalled because She is the quintessence of *prema*, *mahā bhāva.* In *prema* She is Kṛṣṇamayī (filled with Kṛṣṇa), in *rasa* (spiritual flavour) She is Gaurāṅgī, in majesty Sarva Lakṣmīmayī (the sumtotal of all goddesses of fortune) and in sweetness She is the crestjewel of all the *gopikās*, Śrī Rādhikā! The crownjewel of all devotee-saints, Śrī Śuka Muni, experienced Her supreme glory and described Her as the chief of the *gopikās* in Śrīmad Bhāgavata. What's more, even Kṛṣṇa, who Himself enchants millions of Cupids, is enchanted by Her sweet form - *jagan mohana Kṛṣṇa tāhāra mohinī* (C.C.)

Śrī Raghunātha says: "Why does someone who belongs to the most qualified, sweet and beautiful mistress, suffer so much? If You don't give me the gift of the eyes, in other words, if You don't show me Your form and pastimes, then what is the use of this life, that is just burning in a forestfire of separation?" *cakṣu andha anāhāra, āpanāra deha-bhāra, virahe hoilo jara-jara*: "His eyes became blind from fasting, his body felt like a heavy burden to him and he was burning in a fire of separation." He will not see anything else in the world but Svāminī's lotus feet, that is his firm vow. That's why he writes about the *netra dāna*, the gift to the eyes, here. Śrī Raghunātha dāsa's mind and heart are very anxious and unsteady when they perceive the sweetness of Śrīmatī's form, qualities, pastimes and compassion. When Śrīpāda Prabodhānanda Sarasvatī relished Śrī Rādhā's sweetness in a transcendental vision he said:

tat saundaryaṁ sa ca nava navo yauvana-śrī praveśaḥ
sa dṛg-bhaṅgī sa ca rasa-ghanāścarya vakṣoja-kumbhaḥ
so'yaṁ bimbādhara madhurimā tat smitaṁ sā ca vāṇī
seyaṁ līlā-gatir api na vismaryate rādhikāyāḥ

(Rādhā Rasa Sudhānidhi 85)

"I cannot forget Rādhikā's beauty, the opulence of Her newly entering youth, the movements of Her eyes, Her very amazing delicious juglike breasts, the sweetness of Her

Bimbacherry-like lips, Her smile, Her words and Her playful gait!" "Am I deprived of the *darśana* of such a mistress? If You don't reveal Yourself to me because I'm not qualified, then why should I remain alive?" Burning in an intolerable fire of anguish Śrī Raghunātha dāsa weeps and rolls on the bank of Rādhākuṇḍa. Separation from Rādhārāṇī is not like separation from the Supreme Lord! This anguish of separation is very deep and burns like a forestfire, which is exemplified by Śrīla Dāsa Gosvāmī. *kiṁ jīvitena mama duḥkha davāgnidena* "What's the use of this life, that simply burns in a forestfire of sorrow? I cannot take my own life, for I have offered it unto You, and I don't want to maintain it either without having Your blessed devotional service! Please therefore show me the beauty of the tips of Your toenails, that is coveted even by the goddess of fortune!"
Śrī Rasika-Candra Dāsajī sings:

yāra pada kamalera, eka-ṭi nakha prāntera,
bindu mātra suṣamāra kaṇā.
indirā devī svayaṁ, kori koto akiñcana,
lābhe kabhu nā hon sakṣama

"The goddess Indirā (Lakṣmī) Herself could not even attain a drop of the beauty of the edges of one of the nails on Your lotuslike feet, no matter how much she endeavoured for it!"

emona mādhurī tava, āmi āra kibā koro,
more divya netra koro dāna
nitya nitya nava nava, līlā sukha mahotsava,
heri yeno bhariya nayana

"Please give me the divine eyes to behold that sweetness, so that I can fill up these eyes with the great festival of Your ever-fresh blissful pastimes!"

yadi nā dāo cakṣu dāna, vṛthā keno rākhi prāṇa,
dāvānala sama ei jīvana
caraṇa darśana dibe, jvalitechi niśi dine,
kṛpāmayi dāo go daraśana

"If You don't give me those divine eyes, then I vainly keep myself alive, and my heart burns like a forestfire day and night! O merciful One! Give me Your lotus feet and show Yourself to me!"

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VERSE 102:

ĀŚĀBHARAIR AMṚTA-SINDHUMAYAIḤ KATHAÑCIT
KĀLO MAYĀTIGAMITAḤ KILA SĀṀPRATAṀ HI
TVAṀ CET KṚPĀṀ MAYI VIDHĀSYASI NAIVA KIṀ ME
PRĀṆAIR VRAJENA CA VARORU BAKĀRIṆĀPI

āśābharaiḥ - with many hopes; *amṛta* - nectar; *sindhu* - ocean; *mayaiḥ* - filled with; *kathañcit* somehow; *kālaḥ* - time; *mayā* - by me; *atigamitaḥ* - passed; *kila* - surely; *sāmprataṁ* - now; *hi* -certainly; *tvaṁ* - You; *cet* - if; *kṛpāṁ* - mercy; *mayi* - to me; *vidhāsyasi* - will do; *na* - not; *eva* - surely; *kiṁ* -

whether; *me* - to me; *prāṇaiḥ* - with my life; *vrajena* - with Vraja; *ca* - and; *varoru* -nicely-thighed girl; *bakāriṇā* - with Kṛṣṇa; *api* - even.

O Varoru (nicely thighed girl)! Thus I somehow spent this time here aspiring after oceans of nectar. Now if You are not merciful to me, then what is the use of my life, my living in Vraja and even Kṛṣṇa to me?

Explanations: Śrī Raghunātha dāsa does not want to maintain his miserable life anymore without seeing Svāminī. Svāminī reveals Herself to him and says: "Tulasi! You have introduced yourself as My maidservant! Can I now reject you? Surely you will get to see Me!" These words illuminate Śrī Raghunātha dāsa's heart with the light of hope. Then, when Svāminī disappears again, he suffers intolerable transcendental agony. "If You don't grant me the right to serve You then what's the use of this scorching life?" It is as if Svāminī then asks: "How have you been staying alive all this time?" Śrī Raghunātha dāsa says: "Listen, O nicely-thighed Svāmini! Do You think that I blissfully spent this time? With great difficulty I was able to pass this time! Hope was my only support, like cooling drops of nectar that soothe my burning heart!" (*āśā bindukṣitam idam upaity antare hanta śaityam*, Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī) One of the nine special characteristics of *bhāva bhakti* is *āśābandha*, being bound with firm hope for attaining the Lord. *āśābandho bhagavataḥ prāpti-sambhāvanā dṛḍhā* There is an ocean of nectar in that hope. "That nectar will not let me die (*a*= not and *mṛta* = death)![232] I think that if I stay alive I will surely get it! *uddhava dāsa āśa kore heraite, sakhī saha yugala kiśora* - "Uddhava dāsa hopes to see the Divine Couple with Their girlfriends". This tie of hope is even tighter in the stage of *prema* than in the stage of *rati*, and it culminates in *mahā-bhāva*. The maidservants' tie of hope is indescribable! They cannot give up this hope even if they are consoled in visions, dreams, or in *smaraṇa*. The nectarean aspiration for Śrī Rādhā's service is permanently seated in the heart of the practising devotee. Śrīpāda Prabodhānanda Sarasvatī has written: *tat kaiṅkaryam anukṣanādbhuta rasaṁ prāptum dhṛtāśe mayi śrī rādhe nava kuñja nāgari kṛpā-dṛṣṭiṁ kadā dāsyasi* (Rādhā Rasa Sudhanidhi 86) "O Śrī Rādhe, young lady-love of the arbours! I desire the most astonishing *rasa* of Your maidservice, which is a festival of constant love at every moment and which is attained by each of the adolescent girls of Vraja by Your merciful glance alone! When will You cast a merciful glance on me?" Śrī Raghunātha says: "Your mercy is causeless, so sometimes I forget how unqualified I am and I think that I will surely get Your service soon!" *āpanā ayogya dekhi mone pāo kṣobha; tathāpi tomāra guṇe upajāya lobha* (C.C.) "When I look at My own unworthiness My mind becomes upset. But still Your attributes make Me eager for You!" When I see You in dreams, visions and *smaraṇa* then I think I will also attain You personally! My life is also almost over; who can survive this thrashing? O merciful mistress of mine! Hear my anguish! I can't tolerate anymore! Hear my final prayer: "I have nothing more to say. I cannot find anymore words. If, despite all my misery, You will still not give me Your mercy, then what is the use of my life, of my living in Vraja and even of Kṛṣṇa to me? Why should I continue to live without Your mercy? So much time has passed, but I did not receive Your mercy. If my life passes in this way, then what's the use? I don't want Vraja, I don't even want Kṛṣṇa. I don't need anything if You are not merciful to me. I don't have anyone else but You. O Merciful Svāmini! If You are not kind upon this suffering maidservant, then what will be my destination? You are Līlāmayī, a playful girl always intoxicated by pastimes that are sweeter-than-sweet. Therefore it's not right to tell You about my misery. Today, though, I have no other resort than to submit this to Your lotus

[232] This explanation is given by Śrī Ānanda Gopāla Gosvāmī.

feet - if You are not merciful to me, then I don't desire anyone else's mercy."[233] The devotees of the Lord give up religion, economic development, sense enjoyment and even the rarely attained liberation from the material world for His sake. They don't even want to remember these things. Śrīmad Bhāgavata (11.2.53) states:

trailokya vibhava hetave'py akuṇṭha smṛtir ajitātma surādibhir vimṛgyāt
na calati bhagavat padāravindāl lava nimeṣārdham api sa vaiṣṇavāgryaḥ

"He whose memory of the Lord's lotus feet, that are sought for by all the gods and sages, is always fresh and does not deviate for even half a second and he who does not care about all the opulence of the three worlds, is the greatest Vaiṣṇava." And then again, the mind of the devotee who becomes attracted to the sweetness of the form, qualities and pastimes of Kṛṣṇa, the son of Nanda Mahārāja, cannot even be taken away by this Lord Nārāyaṇa. Such an exclusive dedication to Govinda is supreme, according to Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī in Bhakti Rasāmṛta Sindhuḥ (1.2.58):

tatrāpy ekāntināṁ śreṣṭhā govinda hṛta mānasāḥ
yesāṁ śrīśa prasādo'pi mano hartuṁ na śaknuyāt

But those who have become eager to attain the service of Śrī Rādhā, do not even care about Govinda anymore. "I don't need Bakāri (Kṛṣṇa) if I don't get Your mercy! Not only I don't want Govinda, who is Himself suffering separation from Śrī Rādhā, I will even give up the association of those who long for Govinda!" Śrīla Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī writes in his Sva Niyama Daśakam (6):

anādṛtyodgītām api muni-gaṇair vaiṇika mukhaiḥ
pravīnāṁ gāndharvāmapi ca nigamais tat priyatamāṁ
yā ekaṁ govindaṁ bhajati kapaṭī dambhikatayā
tad abhyarṇe śīrṇe kṣaṇam api na yāmi vratam idam

"Not even for a moment will I go near that impure place where a proud hypocrite worships Govinda alone without worshiping His most expert lover Śrī Gāndharvā (Rādhā), whose glories are sung by the Vedic scriptures and great sages like Nārada Muni, who carries the Vīṇā. That is my solemn vow!" Blessed is the service of Śrī Rādhā; blessed is Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī's extraordinary loyalty to Śrī Rādhā! By hearing and chanting his blessed words and by remembering his lotus feet the heart of the practising devotee can also become scented with the fragrance of this loyalty to Śrī Rādhā (*rādhā-niṣṭhā*).

Śrī Raghunātha dāsa says: "O Rādhe! You are an ocean of causeless mercy! I am also worthy of Your mercy, for I have no one else in this world but You! There is no girl as sad as I am!" Thus Śrī Gaurasundara's grace was fully manifest in Śrīla Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī. Śrī Haripada Śila sings:

he varoru he rādhe! nivedana kori pade,
aphuranta āśā ye āmāra
amṛtera pārāvāra, se āśāra nāhi pāra,
taraṅgete ḍubi eka bāra.

"O nicely thighed Rādhe! I am praying to Your feet! My desire is inexhaustible! There is no limit to the nectar-ocean of my aspirations and I dived into its waves just once!"

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[233] Explanation by Śrī Ānanda Gopāla Gosvāmī.

kathañcit duḥkha kaṣṭe, ei rādhākuṇḍa taṭe,
korilām e kāla yāpana
karuṇā pratyāśā kori, kāṅdiyā kāṅdiyā mari,
kṛpā yadi nā koro ekhon
ei vraja vāsa kore, kibā lābha bolo more,
dhik mora jīvana dhārana.
tuya adarśana ahi, viṣe tanu jārahi,
śrī govinde kibā prayojana.

"Somehow I have spent all this time on the bank of Rādhākuṇḍa in great sorrow and difficulty. Depending on Your mercy, I am crying and crying. If You are not merciful to me now, then tell me what is the use of my staying in Vraja? Curses on me for staying alive! My body burns in the poison of the black snake of separation from You, so then what is the use of even Śrī Govinda to me?"

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VERSE 103:

TVAṀ CET KṚPĀMAYI KṚPĀṀ MAYI DUḤKHITĀYĀṀ
NAIVĀTANOR ATITARĀṀ KIM IHA PRALĀPAIḤ
TVAT KUṆḌA MADHYAM API TAT BAHU KĀLAM EVA
SAṀSEVYAMĀNAM API KIṀ NU KARIṢYATĪHA

tvaṁ - You; *cet* - if; *kṛpāmayi* - O merciful girl; *kṛpāṁ* - mercy; *mayi* - unto me; *duḥkhitā* - miserable girl; *ayam* - this; *na* - not; *eva* - surely; *ātanoḥ* - give; *atitarāṁ* - great; *kim* - whether; *iha* - here; *pralāpaiḥ* - with words; *tvat* - Your; *kuṇḍa* - lake; *madhyam* - the midst; *api* - even; *tat* - that; *bahu* - much; *kālam* - time; *eva* - surely; *saṁsevyamānam* - being served; *api* - even; *kiṁ nu* - whether; *kariṣyati* - will do; *iha* - here.

O Kṛpāmayi (merciful girl)! If You are not kind upon this suffering girl then what was the use of all these lamentations and all my service to Your lake for such a long time?

Explanations: Śrī Raghunātha is the embodiment of separation from Śrī Rādhā. Falling on the bank of Rādhākuṇḍa he weeps out of great separation from his mistress. He knows not how to save his life anymore. Day and night the river of his burning devotion swells, being filled up by the rains of grief and flowing ever more forcefully towards the nectar-ocean of Śrī Rādhā's lotus feet. We may have a feeling of want when something small is missing in our lives and when we get something small we may feel fulfilled, but when we miss something tremendous no peace and satisfaction can be felt unless and until we have gotten the whole thing. Śrī Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī's eagerness and hankering for his beloved deity stands before us as the peak of the Himālayas, as the greatest example. An insignificant living entity cannot find any means to reach that high summit. A person who does not practise any *bhajan* cannot possibly fathom Śrīla Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī's anguish of love-in-separation. At every moment new waves of ever-increasing eagerness roll in the river of his heart. He's not

able to tolerate the pangs of separation from Śrī Rādhā anymore for even a moment. Certainly Rādhārāṇī may sometimes respond to the anguish of separation the loyal maidservant goes through, but that response will be momentarily. Seeing Svāminī for just a moment makes the darkness of separation, that comes down later, seem even more deep. It is then as if Śrī Raghunātha's love-scented ears hear the following words: "Tulasi! I am very close by! Where are you lamenting like this?" How much Raghunātha desires to hear that nectar-mocking voice, but the wind of his stuttering life-airs make it vanish again. In this way his desire to see Her increases more and more.

"O Kṛpāmayi Svāmini! O Merciful mistress! I am such a sad girl! If You don't bestow Your mercy upon me, then what is the use of all my lamentations? I have lived by Your lake Rādhākuṇḍa for so long, serving it. If You don't reveal Yourself, then what is the use of all that service?"

jano'yaṁ yācate duḥkhī rudann uccair idaṁ muhuḥ
tat padāmbhoja yugmaika gatiḥ kātaratāṁ gataḥ
kṛtvā nija gaṇasyāntaḥ kāruṇyān nija sevane
niyojayatu māṁ sākṣāt seyaṁ vṛndāvaneśvarī

(Viśākhānandada Stotram - 129,130)

"This miserable and suffering person bows down humbly at Her lotus feet, considering them to be the only goal of his life, and he continuously weeps loudly and pitifully begs: "May the Queen of Vṛndāvana be merciful to me and allow me in Her own party, engaging Me in Her direct service!" In his lamentation Śrī Raghunātha submits his own pitiable condition to Svāminī's lotus feet, saying: "For a long time I have stayed in Your *kuṇḍa*, serving it! If You don't reveal Yourself to me, that what will be the result of all this service? How dear the *kuṇḍa* is to You! What's the use of my service to the *kuṇḍa* without becoming the object of Your mercy?" At one point (in verse 15 of Vilāpa Kusumāñjali) Śrīla Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī said: "When I saw the sweetness of Your lake I developed a desire to serve You.", and in his 'Rādhākuṇḍāṣṭakam' he also glorified the sweetness of that lake so much, but when he feels the pain of separation he says: *vyāghra tuṇḍāyate kuṇḍaṁ jīvātu rahitasya me*: "When I am without my beloved the *kuṇḍa* looks like the gaping mouth of a tiger to me!" Ordinary people can not easily understand what confidential sentiments are hidden in these extraordinary words. With great humility Śrī Raghunātha says: "Hā Kṛpāmayi! You are the embodiment of boundless grace, and I am just a suffering girl! Suffering people are the objects of Your compassion, therefore show me Your quality of compassion and grant me Your devotional service!" At the end of his 'Premāmbhoja Maranda (honey from the lovelotus)'-prayer, Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa says:

tvāṁ natvā yācate dhṛtvā tṛṇaṁ dantair ayaṁ janaḥ
sva dāsyāmṛta sekena jīvayāmuṁ suduḥkhitam
na muñcec charaṇāyātam api duṣṭaṁ dayāmayaḥ
ato gāndharvike hā hā muñcainam naiva tādṛśam

"This person bows down to You, holding a straw between his teeth. Please revive this miserable wretch by sprinkling him with the nectar of Your service. A merciful person does not abandon even a wicked soul who takes shelter of her. Therefore, O Gāndharvike, please don't abandon me!" When Śrī Raghunātha reaches the pinnacle of devotional love he becomes this humble. In Bṛhad Bhāgavatāmṛta (2.5.224 and 225), Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī has written:

dainyas tu paramaṁ premnaḥ paripākena janyate
tāsāṁ gokula nārīṇām iva Kṛṣṇa viyogataḥ
paripākena dainyasya premājasraṁ vitanyate

parasparaṁ tayor itthaṁ kārya kāraṇatekṣate

"Humility becomes manifest when *prema* reaches its ripened stage. Since the *gopīs* love Kṛṣṇa the most (which was shown in the Bhāgavata while they were separated from Him) they are also the most humble. In the same way *prema* becomes manifest when humility culminates. In this way love and humility are Each other's cause and effect." In his Gopāla Campūḥ (Pūrva 33.110), Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī describes that love and humility of the *gopīs* as follows:

dāvas trastā mṛga duhitaraś candra hīnāś cakoryaḥ
srastā vṛkṣān nava kalatikā nīra riktāḥ śapharyaḥ
urjja prāntād bahir apagatā hanta navyābja nālyo
yadvad dṛṣṭvā hari virahitā rādhikādyāś ca tadvat

"Alas! When Śrī Rādhikā and the *gopīs* are separated from Hari they resemble fawns that are scared of a forest-fire, Cakorī-birds that are deprived of the moonlight, vines that have lost hold of their supporting trees, fishes that have come out of the water or young uprooted lotus flowers!" The painful separation of the maidservants from Śrī Rādhā is not even slightly less than that! Some give the following commentary on the words *tvat kuṇḍa madhyam api...sevyamānam* (even in the middle of Your lake I served You): One day at noontime, when Śrīmatī enjoyed Her watersports in Rādhākuṇḍa with the Lord of Her heart She dropped one of Her jewelled toerings in the water. Śrīla Raghunātha Dāsa, in his spiritual body of Tulasī Mañjarī, looked for it under the water for a long time until she found it and put it back on Śrīmatī's toe. Remembering this service, he now says: "Be so kind to me that I will be blessed by attaining that direct service to Your lotus feet that I have rendered so many times and with which You always eased my anxious pain!"
Śrī Rasika-Candra Dāsajī sings:

śuno śuno kṛpāmayi rāi!
e dīnā duḥkhitā jane, yadi kṛpā kaṇā dāne,
nāhi tuṣa kṣaṇa mukha cāi

tabe e pralāpa gāthā, niścoy hoibe vṛthā,
yeno hāya! araṇye rodana
tava kuṇḍa madhya-bhāge, ati prema anurāge,
eto kāla korinu sevana.

tāhe ki koribe hāya! yadi tumi ṭhelā pāya,
sakali hoibe akāraṇa.
mo heno adhama jane, koro kṛpā nija guṇe,
akapaṭe loinu śaraṇa.

"Listen, listen, O merciful Rāi! If You don't give a drop of mercy to this miserable girl, then she cannot find peace for even a moment. Alas! Then surely all her ravings will have been in vain, like crying in the forest. Alas! What will be the use of my staying at Rādhākuṇḍa for so long, serving You with loving attachment, if You now kick me away? Everything will be wasted! Please show Your greatness by bestowing Your mercy upon this fallen soul! I took sincere shelter of You!"

.

VERSE 104:

AYI PRAṆAYA-ŚĀLINI PRAṆAYA PUṢṬA DĀSYĀPTAYE
PRAKĀMAM ATI RODANAIḤ PRACURA DUḤKHA DAGDHĀTMANĀ
VILĀPA KUSUMĀÑJALIR HṚDI NIDHĀYA PĀDĀMBUJE
MAYĀ BATA SAMARPITAS TAVA TANOTU TUṢṬIṀ MANĀK

ayi - O!; *praṇaya* - of pure love; *śālini* - abode; *praṇaya* - love; *puṣṭa* - mature; *dāsya* - service; *āptaye* - for attaining; *prakāmam* - greatly; *ati* - very much; *rodanaiḥ* - with crying; *pracura* - profuse; *duḥkha* - misery; *dagdha* - burned; *ātmanā* - heart; *vilāpa* - of lamentations; *kusuma* - flower; *añjaliḥ* - handful; *hṛdi* - on the heart; *nidhāya* - holding; *pāda* - feet; *ambuje* - on the lotus; *mayā* - by me; *bata* - alas!; *samarpitaḥ* - offered; *tava* - Your; *tanotu* - may it give; *tuṣṭim* - satisfaction; *manāk* - slightest.

O Praṇaya-śālini (abode of pure love)! Thus I am loudly crying, desiring to attain Your mature loving service! Holding Your lotus feet to my heart, which is burning out of intense agony, I'm offering these lamentations to them as a bouquet of flowers. May they be the cause of even the slightest satisfaction to You.....

Explanations: Humbly Śrīla Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī takes shelter of Svāminī's lotus feet for the fulfillment of his desires: "O Svāmini! What more can I say? I have no more words left over, nor do I have the power to utter any! You can give me Your mercy or not, I believe that You are the abode of pure love! Love for Śyāmasundara, love for Your girlfriends, love for Your maidservants! Being Premamayī You instantly take those who love You to You. So it's not that I need You so much, but You will also need me many times!" This loving maidservant keeps the firm hope in her heart that Praṇaya-śālinī Svāminī will once give her Her mature loving service.

"Hā Svāmini! Taking this bouquet of lamentations to my anxious heart I offer them now to Your lotus feet! Although this maidservant is unworthy, she cannot give up hoping! I offer this prayer at Your lotus feet: Let me be Your maidservant, mature in my love! Desiring Your mercy I have offered this bouquet of lamentations, which contains a forest-fire of this maidservant's endless anguish, to Your lotus feet. I have one great aspiration: I want to be Your maidservant, mature in my love. I want to know Your heart and lovingly serve You accordingly! Not any ordinary maidservant, but one who can enter into the solitary *kuñja* unhindered to perform the most intimate services! At that time You and Śyāma will consider me to be the embodiment of Your loving ecstasy! O Praṇaya-śālini! Your heart melts of endless compassion. Please fulfill my desires!"

It is as if Svāminī then reveals herself and tells Tulasī: "Tulasi! What you desire is very difficult to attain!" Tulasī replies: "Hā Svāmini! If I am not qualified for Your service, then leave it! Don't give it! You may keep me in this ocean of sorrow or in any other condition, but I will just offer this bouquet of lamentations to Your lotus feet, weeping and weeping! Please let me know if this has given You even the slightest happiness or satisfaction!"[234]

In this way Tulasī served Svāminī by lovingly stringing these flower-like lamentations into a garland. With their minds' eyes the practising *rāgānugā*-devotees should see the pictures of deep devotional love that were drawn in it by this maidservant, that is suffering the pangs of separation from Svāminī day and night. These emotions will arise also in the heart of a

[234] Explanation by Śrī Ānanda Gopāla Gosvāmī

fortunate devotee who remembers these pangs of separation. This ocean of suffering in separation is so vast and so deep that ordinary persons cannot possibly enter into it. Anyone who surrenders to Tulasī Mañjarī's lotus feet and has seen even one tiny wave of this turbulent ocean of love-in-separation with his mind's eyes can understand that this cannot occur in ordinary people. His mind's eyes will slowly but surely perceive the picture of Śrī Gaurasundara absorbed in Śrī Rādhā's ecstasy of love-in-separation in the Gambhīrā-cell at Nīlācala (Purī). The following heartrending, pitiful tune of lamentation of separation will resound from the twanging Vīṇā of His heart:

kāhā koro kāhā pāo vrajendra-nandana;
kāhā mora prāṇa-nātha muralī vadana
kāhāre kohibo ke vā jāne mora duḥkha;
vrajendra-nandana vinā phāṭe mora buka {C.C.}

"Where shall I go, what shall I do to get Vrajendra-nandana? Where is the flute-playing Lord of My life? Whom shall I tell, who will know of My distress? Without Vrajendra-nandana My heart breaks!"

Usually a benediction (*phalaśruti*) is granted at the end of a prayer, but here there is no need for such a benediction. The prayer is its own benediction. Śrī Raghunātha's voice chokes as he speaks, and he faints. Is this fire of separation extinguished by weeping? Raghunātha did attain the service of Śrīmatī Rādhikā as a result of serving Śrī Rādhākuṇḍa. The reddish sunrise of aspiration begins to glow on the eastern horizon of the sky of his fortune, removing the dense darkness of the newmoon night of his love-in-separation. Suddenly all the ten directions are gladdened by Śrī-Śrī Rādhā-Mādhava's sweet bodily fragrance. Svāminī has come, taking Her Prāṇa Vallabha with Her! Śrīla Dāsa Gosvāmî smells Their sweet bodily fragrance and beholds Their sweet golden and bluish forms, that illuminate the bank of Śrī Rādhākunda. The divine jewels of Śrī Raghunātha's fortune, Śrī-Śrī Rādhā-Śyāma are standing before him! How many streams of merciful tears trickle from Their beautiful eyes! How sweet are Their voices! By smelling Their honey-sweet fragrance, Śrī Raghunātha comes back to life. Svāminī says: "Tulasi! Look, I have come!" Tulasī's heart's desires have been fulfilled! Svāminī stands before her with Her Prāṇanātha. Mercifully She take Tulasī by the hand and embraces her, thus accepting her as Her maidservant. This is the end of her lamentation. Raghunātha had his desires fulfilled. His vine-like body, that was burning in the great fire of separation, is now showered by the stream of the Divine Couple's eternal blissful meeting in the *kuñja*-abode.[235] Gaura-līlā is also eternal, and Śrī Raghunātha dāsa is Mahāprabhu's eternal associate. Fortunate souls can hear Śrīla Raghunātha Dāsa weeping even now in the form of a practising devotee. Here he eternally relishes the sweetness of separation from Svāminī, lamenting and lamenting. At night, when all is silent, Śrīla Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī's pitiful lamentations of separation, that defeat the anxious lamentations of the osprey in sweetness, can still be heard on the bank of Śrī Rādhākuṇḍa.....
Śrīla Rasika-Candra Dāsajī sings:

praṇaya śālini ayi! *he rādhe he kṛpāmayi,*
diva niśi puḍi duḥkhānale
prīti-puṣṭa dāsya tava, *premārtite nitya nava,*
kobe more dibe dāsī bole.

235 Narrated by Śrīla Ānanda Gopāla Gosvāmī.

"O Rādhe! Ayi abode of love! O merciful One! Day and night I am burning in the fire of misery. When will You give me Your service, which is nourished by pure love and eternally fresh eagerness, calling me Your *dāsī*?"

prāṇera pralāpa guli, raciyā kusumāñjali,
tuyā pade korinu arpaṇa.
kṣaṇekera tāre tabe, hoy yadi tuṣṭi lava,
sārthaka hoibe e jīvana.

"I make a bouquet of my heart's utterings and offer them at Your lotus feet. If You are even once slightly satisfied with them, then my life will be a success!"

Thus ends Śrīla Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī's 'Śrī-Śrī Vilāpa Kusumāñjali'

Sources of the Explanations: Lectures given by Śrīla Ānanda Gopāla Gosvāmī (1897-1961) and Paṇḍita Śrī Ananta Dāsa Bābājī Mahārāja. Sanskrit commentary by Śrī Baṅgabihārī Vidyālaṅkāra. Padyānuvādas (Bengali song-translations that follow the commentaries) by Śrī Haripada Śila and Śrī Rasika-Candra dāsa. Commentary of Rādhākuṇḍa Mahānta Paṇḍita Śrī Ananta Dāsa Bābājī Mahārāja, named 'Parimala kaṇā' (a drop of the divine fragrance of this bouquet of lamentations), was published in Gaurābda 499 (1985 A.D.) from Sri Krishna Chaitanya Shastra Mandir, Vrajananda Ghera, PO Radhakunda (district Mathura), U.P., India.

CHRONOLOGICAL ORDER OF TOPICS IN"VILĀPA KUSUMĀÑJALI"

VERSE 1: MAṄGALĀCARAṆA Auspicous invocation; teasing praise of the Guru in his spiritual form.
VERSE 2: MAṄGALĀCARAṆA : Auspicious Invocation; Witty Praise Of A Proud Land Lotus
VERSE 3: ŚRĪ GURUR KṚPĀŚIṢA : The Blessing of Śrī Guru.
VERSE 4: BAHYĀVEŚE ŚRĪ GURU VANDANĀ: Praise of the Guru in External Form.
VERSE 5: GAURA VANDANĀ: Praise of Śrī Caitanya-Candra.
VERSE 6: ŚIKṢĀ GURU VANDANĀ : The refuge of Sanātana Gosvāmī.
VERSE 7: UTKAṬA VIRAHĀNALA: The severe fire of Separation.
VERSE 8: ADBHUTA KṚPĀ-NAUKĀ : The Wonderful Boat of Svāminī's Mercy.
VERSE 9: LĀKṢAUṢADHA : Soothing Medicinal Footlac Against the Poison of Viraha.
VERSE 10: KṚPĀ-NIRĪKṢAṆA SAÑJĪVANĪ : The Reviving Elixir of a Merciful Glance.
VERSE 11: PAṬAVĀSA VIBHŪṢAṆA: A Decoration of Pollen – the Perfection of the Head.
VERSE 12: BĀDHIRYA HARAṆA : The Removal of Real Deafness – An Ocean of Nectar.
VERSE 13: CAKITA KṚPĀ KAṬĀKṢA : A merciful Glance from Frightened Eyes.
VERSE 14: RĀDHĀ-NIṢṬHĀ HETU: The light shed by Rūpa Mañjarī–the cause of Rādhā-niṣṭhā!
VERSE 15: ŚRĪ RĀDHĀKUṆḌA DARŚANA: Love at First Sight of Rādhākūṇḍa.
VERSE 16: ŚRĪ RĀDHĀ'S VARA-DĀSYA : The Super Excellence of Śrī Rādhā's service.
VERSE 17: SAUBHĀGYA MUDRĀ : How Tulasī gets Auspicious Marks on the Arms.

MORNING SERVICES:
VERSE 18: BĀHYĀGĀRA SEVĀ: How Tulasī starts With The most Menial Service.
VERSE 19: MṚTTIKĀ AND VĀRI SEVĀ: How Tulasī brings Clay and Washes Svāminī's Lotus feet.

VERSE 20: DANTA DHĀVANA AND TAILODVARTANA SEVĀ : How Tulasī Brushes Svāminī's Teeth, Rubs and Massages Her with Fragrant Oil.
VERSE 21: ŚRĪ RĀDHĀ'S SNĀNA : How Tulasī bathes Svāminī.
VERSE 22: VASTRA PARIDHĀPANA : How Tulasī dries Svāminī and Dresses Her.
VERSE 23: VEṆĪ-BANDHANA: How Tulasī Makes Svāminī's Braid with a Garland.
VERSE 24: TILAKA RACANĀ AND KUṄKUMA CARCĀ : How Tulasī makes Tilaka, applies Kuṅkuma powder and draws Pictures.
VERSE 25: SĪMANTE SINDŪRA REKHĀ : How Tulasī makes a Stripe of Sindūra.
VERSE 26: ARUṆA RASA BINDU : How Tulasī makes Red Fragrant Spots.
VERSE 27: ŚREṢṬHA KARṆABHŪṢAṆA: How Tulasī hangs fabulous Earrings on Svāminī's Ears.
VERSE 28: KAÑCULĪ SEVĀ : How Tulasī conceals Svāminī's Jewel-like Breasts.
VERSE 29: SUCĀRU MUKTĀ MĀLĀ : How Tulasī places beautiful Pearl- and Jewel-necklaces.
VERSE 30: NĪLA CUḌI AND RATNĀṄGURĪYAKA: How Tulasī hangs Bangles around Svāmiṅi's Wrists and places Jewelled Rings on Her Fingers.
VERSE 31: MEKHALĀ, NŪPURA AND PĀDĀṄGURĪYAKA : How Tulasī applies Svāminī's Waist-bells, Ankle-bells and Toe-rings.
VERSE 32: HARI RAṄGADA AṄGADA : How Tulasī Places Svāminī's Armlets, that Delight Hari.
VERSE 33: GRAIVEYA-SEVĀ : How Tulasī hangs the Graiveya-necklace.
VERSE 34: KAUSTUBHA MITRA : How Tulasī Places the Syamantaka-jewel, Kaustubha's friend.
VERSE 35: TRUṬI-BHAYA : Won't Svāminī's Waist break?
VERSE 36: NĀSA-MAUKTIKA SEVĀ : Hanging Svāminī's Nose-pearl.
VERSE 37: NAVA RATNA-MĀLIKĀ PARIṆAYA: The wedding of a Jewel-string.
VERSE 38: CAKRA-ŚALĀKĀ DHĀRAṆA : What makes Kṛṣṇa spin like a Disc?
VERSE 39: MUKUNDĀMODA MANDIRA: Mukunda's temple of Bliss.
VERSE 40: DAŚANA RAÑJANA SEVĀ : How Tulasī draws Red Lines On Svāminī's Teeth.
VERSE 41: UTKṚṢṬA KHĀDIRA RĀGA : How Tulasī applies Marvellous Camphor-lipstick.
VERSE 42: KAJJALA-SEVĀ : How Tulasī applies Eye-liner around Svāminī's eyes.
VERSE 43: YĀVAKA RĀGA RAÑJANA: How Tulasī puts footlac on Svāminī's feet - and Kṛṣṇa's head!
VERSE 44: MADHURA MALLI MĀLĀ : How Tulasī hangs a Sweet Jasmine Garland surrounded by Buzzing Bees on Svāminī's lowered Shoulders.
VERSE 45: SŪRYĀRGHYA TARPAṆA; How Svāminī Offers Oblations to the Sun.

AFTERNOON SERVICES:

VERSE 46: NANDĪŚVARE MIṢṬĀNNA PRERANA: Tulasī is sent to Nandīśvara with Sweets.
VERSE 47: ŚRĪ RĀDHĀ'S KUŚALA PRAŚNA : Mother Yaśodā Inquires about Svāminī's Welfare.
VERSE 48: ŚRĪ KṚṢṆĀDHARĀMṚTA ĀNAYANA: How Tulasī delivers Kṛṣṇa's Lip-Nectar.
VERSE 49: BHOJANA SEVĀ : How Tulasī serves Kṛṣṇa's Prasāda to Svāminī and Her Sakhīs.
VERSE 50: MADHURA VĀRI ARPAṆA: Tulasī Serves Svāminī Sweet Mouth-water after Supper.
VERSE 51: DHŪPA DĀNA AND VĪJANA SEVĀ : .How Tulasī Offers Incense and Fans Svāminī
VERSE 52: ŚREṢṬHA TĀMBŪLĀRPAṆA: Tulasī offers marvellous Betelleaves with Camphor.
VERSE 53: ŚRĪ RĀDHĀ'S ĀRĀTRIKA : How Tulasī Offers Ārati - with her Hair!
VERSE 54: SVAPNA VILĀSA : How Tulasī Makes a Dream-bed for Svāminī.
VERSE 55: ŚRĪ PĀDA PADMA SAMVĀHANA: Rūpa Mañjarī's merciful gift of Service To Tulasī.
VERSE 56: ŚRĪ RĀDHĀ'S BHAKTI LATĀ : What makes the Creeper of Tulasī's Devotion grow?
VERSE 57: ABHILAṢITA SUDHĀ : How Svāminī offers Tulasī Her Prasāda - from the mouth!

MORNING SERVICES:

VERSE 58: NANDĪŚVARE GAMANA: How Tulasī Follows Svāminī to Nandīśvara.
VERSE 59: KAṬI-DHĀRANA : How Tulasī holds Svāminī's Brittle Waist - while She walks!

VERSE 60: NANDĪŚVARA ŚOBHĀ : Nandīśvara is greater than Govardhana!
VERSE 61: DHANIṢṬHĀYĀ-PRAṆAYA ĀSVĀDANA : Relishing Dhaniṣṭhā's Love For Svāminī.
VERSE 62: PĀKAŚĀLĀ RASĀSVĀDANA : Relishing Rasa in the Kitchen.
VERSE 63: RASA SAÑCAYA ARPAṆA: How shy Svāminī hands Rohiṇī Her Cooked Dishes.
VERSE 64 : MADHURA RASAVATĪ'S MUKHA PADMA: Madhura Rasavatī Rāi's Lotus face.
VERSE 65: KṚṢṆA'S VANAGAMANODYOGA : How Govinda departs for Cow-tending.
VERSE 66: GOṢṬHEŚĀ'S ŚAPATHA : Queen Yaśodā's oaths - "Rādhe, eat !"
VERSE 67: NAVA VADHŪ NYĀYA LĀLYAMĀNA : How Queen Yaśodā cuddles Svāminī like her own Daughter-in-law.

MIDDAY-SERVICES

VERSE 68: DIVĀBHISĀRA: How Wide-eyed Svāminī rushes to Hari's adorned Kuñja.
VERSE 69: PUṢPĀLAṄKĀRA ŚṚṄGĀRA SEVĀ: How Svāminī Adorns Her Beloved with Flowers.
VERSE 70: ABHISĀRA VĀRTĀ : How the parrot Vicakṣaṇa's message delights Tulasī.
VERSE 71: MADANĀNANDADA KUÑJA: Tulasī Makes a Bed of Flowers in Viśākhā's Kuñja.
VERSE 72: ŚRĪ PĀDA-PADMA SAMVĀHANA: How Tulasī massages Svāminī's Lotus Feet.
VERSE 73: DĀNA-LĪLĀYA DARPITA NETRĀ : Tulasī proudly sees Svāminī in the Dāna Līlā.
VERSE 74: VĀTA-SEVĀ : How Vṛndāvana's wind serves Svāminī.
VERSE 75: ŚRĪ RĀDHĀKUṆḌE JALA KRĪḌĀ : Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa's Water Sports in Rādhākuṇḍa.
VERSE 76: ARIṢṬAJAYINĀ SEVĀ : Ariṣṭajayi's Weakness.
VERSE 77: PREMA VILĀSA VIVARTA: A Reversion of Amorous Roles.
VERSE 78: GŪḌHA HĀSYA VADANĀ : How Mādhava's Failure Causes Tulasī's Hidden Smile.
VERSE 79: MADHURA MADANA GĀNA: How Rādhā-Mādhava Sing Sweet Amorous Songs.
VERSE 80: MURALĪ SAṀGOPANA : Hiding Hari's flute.
VERSE 81: MADHURA MADHURA GOṢṬHĪ : An Ever-so-sweet Conversation.

LATE EVENING SERVICE:

VERSE 82: NĀMA-GRĀHA : Svāminī calls Tulasī by Name.

MISCELLANEOUS SERVICES:

VERSE 83: MUKHARĀ'S SUDHĀMAYA VĀKYA: Mukharā's nectarean Call.
VERSE 84: SMITA KARPŪRA VĀSITA VĀKYĀMṚTA: Serving camphor-laced nectar audibly and visibly.
VERSE 85: PUṢPA-CAYAṆA LĪLĀ : A crooked Quarrel Over picked Flowers.
VERSE 86: MĀNA BHAṄGA : How Tulasī falls at Lalitā's Feet to break Svāminī's Pique.
VERSE 87: ABHIṢEKOTSAVA: Svāminī's Coronation as the Queen of Vṛndāvana.
VERSE 88: VṚṢABHĀNUPURA YĀTRĀ : How Svāminī visits Barsānā.
VERSE 89: DIVYA GĀNA-ŚIKṢĀ : How Svāminī gives Singing-lessons to Tulasī.
VERSE 90: DIVYA RASA KĀVYA PĀṬHA : How Svāminī reads Divine Rasika Poems to Tulasī.
VERSE 91: VĪṆĀ-VĀDANA ŚIKṢĀ : How Svāminī teaches Tulasī to play Vīṇā.
VERSE 92: PRIYA HĀRA GUMPHANA: How Tulasī Quickly strings Shy Svāminī's Dear Necklace.
VERSE 93: CARVITA TĀMBŪLA CUMBANA: How Svāminī gives Tulasī a Betel-kiss.
VERSE 94: DAYITA MADHURA KĀÑCĪ : Recovering a Dear, Sweet Sash of Bells.
VERSE 95: TĀḌANA KṚPĀ LAKṢAṆA : Svaminī's Merciful Forgiveness.
VERSE 96: PŪRṆATAMA ŚARAṆĀGATI : How Tulasī Fully Surrenders to Svāminī.
VERSE 97: KUṆḌA VĀSA SAṆKALPA : How Dāsa Gosvāmī Vows to live at Rādhākuṇḍa.
VERSE 98: ŚRĪ SAROVARA PRĀRTHANĀ: Prayer to Śrī Rādhākuṇḍa.
VERSE 99: ŚRĪ VIŚĀKHĀ PRĀRTHANĀ : Prayer to Śrīmatī Viśākhā.
VERSE 100: ŚRĪ GOKULACANDRA PRĀRTHANĀ : Prayer to Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the moon of Gokula.
VERSE 101: NETRA DĀNA : The Greatest Gift to the Eyes.

VERSE 102: NA BAKĀRIṆĀPI : I don't want Kṛṣṇa!
VERSE 103: KUṆḌA-VĀSA VYARTHATĀ : Did I serve Rādhākuṇḍa in vain?
VERSE 104: PRAṆAYA ŚĀLINĪ TUṢYATU : May the Abode of Love be Pleased!

VERSE INDEX ON ROMAN ALPHABETICAL ORDER

ālīkulena lalitā pramukhena sārdham 54
āliṅganena śirasaḥ paricumbanena 67
amṛtābdhi rasa-prāyais 12
api sumukhi kadāhaṁ mallatī keli-talpe 81
api bata rasavatyāḥ siddhaye mādhavasya 58
ārātrikena bhavatīṁ kim u devī devīṁ 53
āśābharair amṛta sindhumayaiḥ kathañcid 102
aṅgadena tava vāma doḥ sthale 37
ati sulalita lākṣāśliṣṭa saubhāgya 17
aty utkaṭena nitarāṁ virahānalena 7
āyātodyat kamala vadane hanta 82
ayi praṇaya śālini praṇaya-puṣṭa dāsyāptaye 104
ayi vipinam aṭantam saurabheyī-kulānāṁ 65
ayi vimala jalānāṁ gandha karpūra puṣpaiḥ 21
bhojanasya samaye tava yatnād 51
bhojanāvasare devi snehena 57
bhojane guru sabhāsu kathañcin 64
bhrātraḥ go'yutam atra mañju vadane 88
daśanaṁs te kadā rakta rekhābhiḥ 40
dattaḥ pralamba-ripuṇodbhaṭa 34
devi bhāṣita pīyūṣam 84
devi duḥkha kula sāgarodare 8
devi te caraṇa padma dāsikām 10
goṣṭhendra putra mada citta 27
goṣṭheśayātha kutukāc chapathādi 66
govardhanādri nikaṭe mukuṭena narma 73
hā naptri rādhe tava sūrya bhakteḥ 83
hā nātha gokula sudhākara 100
hā rūpa mañjari sakhi praṇayena devīm 68
hamvā-ravair iha gavām api ballabānāṁ 60
hanta devi tilakasya samantād 26
he śrī sarovara sadā tvayi sā mad īśā 98
jitvā pāśaka khelāyāṁ 80
kadā te mṛga śāvākṣi 39
kalāvati natāṁsayoḥ pracura kāma 44
kanaka guṇitam uccair mauktikam 36
karṇayor upari cakra śalāke 38
karpura pūra paripūrita nāga-vallī 52
kenāpi doṣa lava mātra lavena devi 95

Kṛṣṇa vaktrāmbujocchiṣṭam 48
kṣaṇam api tava saṅgam nā tyajed 99
kusuma cayana khelāṁ kurvatīm 85
lajjayāli puratah parato māṁ 89
lakṣmīr yad aṅghri-kamalasya nakhāñcalasya 101
lalitatara mṛṇālī kalpa-bāhu-dvayaṁ te 32
mādhavaṁ madana keli vibhrame 78
mādhavāya nata-vaktram ādṛta 63
maṇicaya khacitābhir nīla cūḍāvalībhiḥ 30
nānā maṇi prakara gumphita cāru puṣṭa 29
nānā puṣpair kvaṇita madhupair devi 71
nānā vidhaiḥ pṛthula kāku-bharair asahyaiḥ 86
nānā vidhair amṛta sāra rasāyanais taiḥ 49
nija kuṇḍa taṭī kuñje 91
nītānna mad vidha lalāṭa-taṭe lalāṭaṁ 47
niviḍa madana yuddhe prāṇa-nāthena sārdhaṁ 94
pādābjayos tava vinā vara dāsyam eva 16
pādāmbhoje maṇimaya tulakoṭi-yugmena 31
pānāya vāri madhuraṁ nava pāṭalādi 50
pānīyaṁ cīna vastrair śaśimukhi śanakaiḥ 22
pārśvadvaye lalitayātha viśākhayā ca 59
prabhur api yadunandano ya eṣa 4
prakṣālya pāda-kamalaṁ kṛta danta-kāṣṭhāṁ 19
prakṣālya pāda kamalaṁ tad anukramena 23
prakṣālya pāda kamale kuśale praviṣṭā 62
praṇālīṁ kīlālair bahubhir abhisaṅkṣālya 18
prānta-dvaye parivirājita guccha-yugma 35
prāptāṁ nija praṇayini nikaraiḥ parītāṁ 61
prātaḥ sudhāṁśu militaṁ mṛdam atra 19
prītyaḥ maṅgala gīta nṛtya vilasad 87
rāsotsave ya iha gokulacandra bāhu 33
sākaṁ tvayā sakhi nikuñja gṛhe sarasyāḥ 69
samantād unmatta bhramara-kula jhaṅkāra 75
samvāhayiṣyati padau tava kiṅkarīyam 55
sarovara lasat taṭe madhupa guñji kuñjāntare 76
śaśakabhṛd abhisāre netra-bhṛṅgāñcalābhyāṁ 13
sindūra rekhā sīmante 25
sphīta svāntam kayācit sarabhasam 77
śrī rūpa mañjari karārcita pāda-padma 72
śrutvā vicakṣaṇa mukhād vrajarāja-sūnoḥ 70
sthala kamalini yuktaṁ garvitā kānane'smin 2
subhaga mṛgamadenākhaṇḍa śubhrāṁśu 24
sulalita nija bāhvāśliṣṭa goṣṭhendra-sūnoḥ 79
sūryāya sūrya-maṇi nirmita vedi madhye 45
sva kuṇḍaṁ tava lolākṣi 97
sva mukhān man mukhe devi 93
svapne'pi kiṁ sumukhi te caraṇāmbujātā 11

tava tanuvara gandhāsaṅgī bātena candrā- 74
tavaivāsmi tavaivāsmi 96
tavodgīrṇaṁ bhojyaṁ sumukhi 56
tvad alokana kālāhi 9
tvaṁ cet kṛpāmayi kṛpāṁ na hi duḥkhitāyāṁ 103
tvaṁ rūpa mañjari sakhi prathitā pure'smin 1
utkhādirena nava candra virājitena 41
vairāgya yug bhakti-rasaṁ prayatnaih 6
vihārais truṭitaṁ hāraṁ 92
vrajapura pati rajñyā ājñayā miṣṭam annaṁ 46
vrajendra vasati sthale vividha ballabī-saṅkule 3
yā te kañculir atra sundari mayā vakṣojayoḥ 28
yācita lalitayā kila devyāḥ 90
yadā tava sarovaraṁ sarasa bhṛṅga-saṅghollasat 15
yad avadhi mama kācin mañjari rūpa pūrvaṁ 14
yasyāṅka rañjita śiras tava māna bhaṅge 43
yat prānta-deśa lavaleśa vighūrnitena 42
yo māṁ dustara geha nirjala mahākūpād 5

ŚRĪ RĀDHIKĀ'S HOLY NAMES IN VILĀPA KUSUMĀÑJALI

On Roman alphabetical order

Āyatākṣi (Wide-eyed Girl) 68
Āyatodyat kamala vadane (Girl whose face is like a wide open lotus flower) 82
Bhāvinī (beautiful, emotional Girl) 19
Bhavyā (beautiful, auspicious Girl) 47
Cañcalākṣī (restless eyed Girl) 38
Devī (goddess) 8, 9,10,13,16,18,24,25,26,40,44,48,52,53,54,57,63,68,71,80,82, 84,90,91,92,93,95,96,99
Dhīrā (grave Girl) 87
Dhīramati (grave Girl) 95
Gāṅgeya gātrī (golden limbed Girl) 41
Goṣṭhendra sūnu dayitā (the beloved of the Cowherd Prince) 23
Hema gaurī (golden beauty) 29
Hrīmati (shy Girl) 66
Hrī puñja mūrti (great bashfulness personified) 82
Indīvarākṣī (blue lotuseyed Girl) 30
Īśā (goddess) 98,99,101
Īśvarī (goddess) 69
Jita vidhu mukha padmā

(She Whose Lotus-like Face defeats the Splendour of the Moon)....21
Kalāvati (the Artful Girl)....44
Kalyāṇī (Auspicious, beautiful Girl)....12
Kanaka gaurī (Golden Girl)....72
Khañjanākṣī (Girl Whose Eyes are as Frisky as Wagtail Birds)....67
Kṛpāmayi (Merciful Girl)....103
Kṛśodarī (Slender Waisted Girl)....35
Kuṅkumāṅgī (Girl Whose limbs are Powdered with Vermilion)....49
Kuśalā (Beautiful, Auspicious Girl)....62
Lolākṣī (Frisky-eyed Girl)....97
Madhurā (Sweet Girl)....64
Madhura gātrī (Girl with a Sweet body)....52
Madhura mukhī (Sweet-Faced Girl)....74
Mañju vadanā (Fair-faced Girl)....88
Manojña hṛdayā (Girl with a Beautiful Heart)....55
Mṛga Śāvākṣī (Fawn Eyed Girl)....39
Mugdhāṅgī (She Whose limbs are Enchanting)....45
Nakha-dalita haridrā garva gaurī
(She Whose golden lustre destroys the Pride of Turmeric which is scratched by the Nails)....17
Praṇaya Śālinī (Abode of Pure Love)....104
Rādhā (Kṛṣṇa's Topmost Worshiper)....83
Sadayā (Merciful Girl)....86,89
Śaśimukhī (Moon Faced Girl)....71,75,94
Sphuṭat sarasijākṣī (Blooming Lotus Eyed Girl)....15
Sthala-kamalinī (Land Lotus)....2
Subhagā (Auspicious, Lucky, Beautiful Girl)....70
Subhaga mukhī (Fair Faced Girl)....79
Sumukhī (Fair Faced Girl)....11,34,45,56,66,78,81
Sundarī (Beautiful Girl)....28
Sunetrā (Beautiful Eyed Girl)....31
Suvratā (Dedicated Girl)....85
Svāminī (Mistress)....7,28,58,77
Svarṇa gaurī (Golden Beauty)....37
Taralākṣī (Restless Eyed Girl)....50
Varoru (Nicely Thighed Girl)....7,46,76,102
Vṛndāraṇya rājñī (Queen of Vṛndāvana)....14

GLOSSARY

Abhisāra - Love Journey.
Abhiṣeka - Ritual bathing for a coronation or the birthday of a deity.
Ācārya - Spiritual master who teaches by example.
Aguru - Aloe perfume
Anurāga - Continuous feelings of passionate love.
Ānanda - Spiritual bliss.
Aśoka - A bright red flower that blooms only when touched by the foot of a beautiful girl.
Atimuktā - Mādhavī-flower (literally: whiter than pearls), or: completely liberated.
Bahuvrīhi - One of the four principal kinds of compounds in Sanskrit in which two or more nouns in apposition to Each other are compounded.
Bakula - A fragrant tree that blooms only when sprinkled with nectar from a young girl's mouth.
Bandhujīva, Bandhuka - (literally: living in group) Deep-red flowers that open at midday in the autumn only to wither by the next morning.
Bhajana - Devotional worship of God consisting of chanting, hearing, remembering and living at a holy place.
Bhajan kuṭīra - Cottage where a saint lives who worships God.
Bhāva - Lit.: sentiment. Advanced stage of transcendental loving feelings for God.
Bhāvollāsa - (lit. the joy of sentiment) Condition of a devotee in female spiritual form who has more love for Rādhā than for Kṛṣṇa.
Brahmacārī - Young, celibate student.
Brahman - Abstract aspect of the Supreme Absolute truth.
Brāhmaṇa - Highest, priestly class, that is engaged in ritual worship of God.
Brāhma Muhūrta - (lit. the moment of spirit) The hour before sunrise. This is considered to be the best time in the day for spiritual practices.
Cakora - A kind of nocturnal partridge that subsists solely by drinking the nectarean rays of the moon.
Cakravāka - Ruddy goose. A kind of flamingo that mourns loud at night when it must be separated from its mate.
Campaka - Very fragrant golden flower from Vraja.
Cātaka - Bird that lives only on rainwater.
Catechu - Substance that makes the pan (spiced betelleaves) so reddish.
Chādar - Cape or thin blanket that protects a saint from the cold.
Dāsī - Maidservant.
Dūti(kā) - Girl-messenger of Rādhā or Kṛṣṇa.
Dhoṭī - Dress for males, consisting of a piece of cotton or silk cloth which is tied around the waist and folded between and before the legs.
Fifth note - A love-cry made during or before coition to signify pleasure. The cuckoos of Vraja sing it during the spring season.
Ghāṭa - Bathingplace, usually with a line of turrets standing in the water or on the banks.
Ghī - Clarified butter. A sacred ingredient used for rituals and for cooking.
Gopī - Cowherdgirl. The *gopīs* of Vraja are Kṛṣṇa's greatest devotees.
Guru - Spiritual teacher.
Haldi - A healthy yellow powder which is often used in Vedic rituals. A sign of vernal renewal and auspiciousness
Haritaki - Yellow myrobalan tree.
Hlādinī - God's pleasure potency, personified by the *gopīs*.

Japa - Repeatedly whispering sacred syllables (*mantras*), while keeping count on a rosary (*mālā*).
Jāti - Nutmeg.
Kadamba - (lit: abundance) Tree with fragrant orange blossoms which blooms during the first rains (in July). The flowers exude liquors. From such trees Kṛṣṇa jumped to defeat the Kāliya-snake and to steal the clothes of the unmarried *gopīs*.
Kāśmīra - Saffron from Kashmir.
Kesara - Saffron flower or crocus.
Ketakī - The screw-pine, a highly fragrant evergreen with large, spinous leaves. The flowers are worn in a woman's hair to attract the lover.
Keyūra - Bracelet on upper arm.
Khañjana - Wagtailbird. A small bird with white breast and black wings which mates in rivers and ponds in autumn. Famous for its brisk, frisky dance-steps that make a festive atmosphere.
Kiṅkarī - Transcendental maidservant of Śrīmatī Rādhikā.
Kunda - White flower.
Kuṇḍa - Sacred lake or pond.
Kuṅkuma - Red vermilion powder the *gopīs* and all other married women smear on their breasts.
Kuśa āsana - Seat made of sacred grass meant for Vedic rituals.
Līlā - Transcendental play.
Loṭā - Waterpot.
Mādhavī - Spring creeper with very fragrant white flowers.
Mahā-bhāva - The greatest love of God.
Mahā-jana - A great Bengali poet and devotional teacher of yore.
Mahātma - Great soul, or saint.
Makara - A crocodile or sea-monster; painted on a woman's breasts or cheeks or worn as jewellery by men; the insignia of the love-god Cupid and his vehicle.
Mālatī - Spring-creepers with white, heavily perfumed flowers.
Malayan breezes - The wind from a South-west Indian mountainrange that abounds in sandalwood-trees. The wind from those mountains is heavily scented with sandal fragrance.
Māna - proud, jealous anger of a lover or lovers.
Maṅgala Ārātrika - Auspicious ceremony held for images of God before sunrise. Incense, lamps, water, flowers and fans are offered to the image by way of worship or greeting. During this ceremony devotees stand outside of the deity-room (sanctorum) and sing, or bang on gongs.
Mañjarīs - (literally: bud) Spiritual maidservants of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī of about 12 to 13 years old. They render service to Her practically twenty-four hours a day.
Mantra - Formula consisting of sacred words. Proper repetition of a *mantra* causes enlightenment.
Māyā - God's illusory potency which causes one to forget Him.
Mṛdaṅga - Clay Indian drum with one big head and a small head.
Muralī - Long, female flute of Kṛṣṇa with nine holes.
Nāgara - (lit: Man about town). The Supreme Amorous Hero Śrī Kṛṣṇa.
(Ni)kuñja - Romantic groves in the forests of Vraja where Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa have Their loving pastimes.
Nitya siddha - Eternally perfect, liberated associate of God.
Pān - (In Sanskrit called Tāmbūla or Vīṭī) Betulnuts that are wrapped in special betelleaves, along with other delicious spices such as cardamom, cloves, camphor and catechu.
Parikramā - Circumambulation of a holy place, a temple or an entire area.
Pika - Indian cuckoo.
Prasāda (lit. mercy) - the remnants of a deity's meals, garlands, unguents and garments.
Prema - Divine love of God.
Priyājī - Name of Śrī Rādhikā, meaning: "Kṛṣṇa's Beloved".

Priyatama - Name of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, meaning: "The most beloved".
Pūrva rāga - Preliminary stage of love, the first attachment (falling in love).
Pūjā - Ritual worship.
Rāgānugā bhakti - Devotion which is not urged by threats, fear or respect, but by spontaneous, anxious love.
Rasa - (literally: taste) transcendental flavour. The 'savouring' of the transcendental bliss of love for Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa.
Rāsa - Circular, pastoral dance of men and women. Most famous of Śrī Kṛṣṇa's pastimes.
Rasa Śāstra - Scriptures on play, especially romantic and erotic play, like Kāma Sūtra of Vatsyāyana Muni or the Nāṭya Śāstra of Bharata Muni. In the spiritual sense all the books that describe Kṛṣṇa's romantic pastimes and that teach devotees how to enter into such pastimes.
Rasika - (Literally: connoisseur, relisher or aesthete) Those sensitive devotees who are so fortunate to be able to savour the transcendental flavours of Śrī-Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa's transcendental pastimes.
Rasodgāra - Recollection of previously experienced amorous pastimes and their concomitant emotions with one's best friends.
Sādhanā, or **Sādhanā Bhakti** - Devotional worship in the stage of practice, a stage before the perfection of devotion is attained.
Sahṛdaya samāja - Society of likeminded devotees.
Sakhī - Spiritual girlfriends of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī, of about the same age as Her, fourteen years old. They always accompany Her, protect Her and support Her during Her love affairs with Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Lalitā and Viśākhā are the most prominent.
Samādhi - Topmost stage of trance in mystic *yoga.*
Sampradāya - Sect or tradition of saints.
Sañcārī bhāva - Evanescent sentiments.
Sandeśa - (Lit.: message) Sweet made by boiling up the essence of milk.
Saṅkīrtana - Congregational chanting of the holy names of God.
Sārī - Five metre long cotton or silken cloth worn by women both as a dress and as a veil.
Sāttvika bhāva - (Literally: existential ecstasy) Emotions of love that are clearly visible on the body, such as horripilations, sweating, become stunned, changing bodily colour, changing of voice, trembling. Total of eight.
Sevya - The worshipable deity that is to be served.
Sindūra - Red powder worn in the part by married women in India.
Smaraṇa - Devotional practice of remembering God's transcendental names, pastimes, forms and attributes.
Śṛṅgāra rasa - Erotic transcendental flavour.
Śuka-Sārī - Male and female parrots, very eloquent in Sanskrit praise.
Svarūpa āveśa - A devotee's engrossement in the consciousness of his eternal, transcendental identity.
Tamāla - A tree with a straight trunk, fragrant leaves, white blossoms, and a very dark bark, growing near rivers. It is associated with night and darkness and particularly with nocturnal or autumnal trysts, the erotic sentiment and Kṛṣṇa.
Tantra - Scriptures dealing with mystical and occult practice.
Tilaka - Auspicious mark on the forehead and over the nose made with clay, musk or even with jewels.
Upāsanā - Subject of transcendental meditation (for full definition, see purport of verse 42).
Vairāgya - Dispassion, renunciation.
Vāma, vāmyavati - Proud, unsubmissive girl that is hard to persuade.
Vīṇā - Stringed instrument with a resonance box at both sides of the stem.
Viraha - Feelings of separation from God.
Virahī - A person suffering from separation.

Virahavatī or virahinī - A girl who feels separation.
Vraja - An area south-east of New Delhi, which has a perimetre of 168 miles around the city of Mathurā in the Indian state of Uttara Pradeśa. It is here that Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa's transcendental pastimes eternally take place and where Their saintly devotees live.
Yoga pīṭha - Meetingplace for Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa and Their girlfriends at Nandīśvara (in the morning), Rādhākuṇḍa (at noontime) and Vṛndāvana (at nighttime).
Yogī - Mystic.
Yugala Kiśora - The transcendental adolescent couple of Vraja, Śrī-Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa.
Yūtheśvarī - Leader of a group of *gopī*-lovers of Kṛṣṇa.

SANSKRIT METERS

Vasanta Tilakam (Vernal Crown)

One of the most frequently used Sanskrit meters, it consists of 14 syllables per line and is also the most often used meter in Vilāpa Kusumañjali, for verses: 1, 7, 11, 16, 19, 20, 23, 27, 29, 33, 34, 35, 41, 42, 43, 45, 47, 49, 50, 52, 53, 54, 55, 59, 60, 61, 62, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 72, 73, 86, 95, 98, 100, 101, 102 and 103

Mālinī (Garland-Weaving Girl)

Consists of 15 syllables per line and is used in verses:
2, 13, 14, 17, 21, 24, 30, 32, 36, 46, 58, 65, 74, 79, 81, 85, 94 and 99.

Anustubh (Following In Praise, or: Sarasvatī)

This famous meter, consisting of eight syllables per line, is the main meter of Bhagavad Gītā, and is used in Vilāpas nr: 9, 12, 25, 39, 40, 48, 57, 80, 84, 91, 92, 93, 96, 97

Upajāti (Sub-meter)

This meter is one of several consisting of 11 syllables per line, being a mixture of the Indra-Vajra and Upendra-Vajra-submeters. The Upajātis used in Vilāpa Kusumāñjali are of the following kinds:
6 (Buddhi), 83 (Rāmā), 78 (Rathoddhatā-Svāgatayoḥ, combined), 26, 38, 51, 64, 89, 90 (Svāgatā)

Pṛthvī (Earth)

This meter consists of 17 syllables per line and is used in Vilāpas nr: 3, 15, 44, 76 and 104

Śārdūla Vikrīḍita (Tiger-Game)

This meter has 19 syllables a line and is used in f.i. the Ṣaḍ-Gosvāmy aṣṭakam. Verses 5, 28, 87 and 88.

Rathoddhatā (The Elevated Chariot)

Like Upajāti, consisting of 11 syllables per line and used in verses: 8, 10, 37 and 63

Mandākrāntā (The Slow Mover)

Like Pṛthvī, this meter consists of 17 syllables per line and is used in verses: 31, 71 and 82

Śikhariṇī (Crested Lady)

This meter also consists of 17 syllables per line and is used in verses: 18, 56 and 75

Srag-dharā (She Who Wears A Garland)

This is one of the longest Sanskrit-meters (21 syllables per line), used in verses 22 and 77

Puṣpitāgrā (Tip Of A Flower}

Consists of 12 syllables per line and is used only in Vilāpa number: 4